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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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EXCLUSIVE Q&A

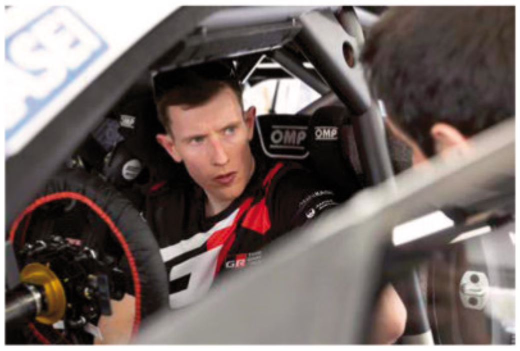
JACKIE OLIVER

A man of many parts tackles another chapter in his career: the readers' questions **p16**

Toyota Yaris ace says he has unlocked more potential from his Japanese machine

ELFYN: I'M READY TO TURN UP THE HEAT IN WORLD RALLY TITLE PUSH

Evans (above, right) says Mexico marked a results breakthrough



By Matt James

Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT star Elfyn Evans has promised to hit top gear in his attack for a maiden World Rally Championship title as the series prepares for its European return on April 20.

The Welshman was boosted by a fighting podium position last time out in Mexico and sits just 12 points behind Yaris team-mate Sebastien Ogier in the table. Evans says the rostrum finish has helped him unlock more secrets from the hatchback and his optimism has been noted by team boss Jari-Matti Latvala.

Evans, who has finished as runner up in the points chase on two previous occasions, said: "We're definitely moving in the right direction with the car, with my driving and with the set-up. Things are improving all around and we're finding some consistency. Everything's open with the championship, which is good."

Team principal Latvala has backed the Briton to continue his increased performance. "To [return to] the podium gives him good confidence for the future," said the Finn. "You could see on his face [in Mexico] that he had this fighting spirit."

The next round of the championship takes place in Croatia from April 20-23.

Full story, p9

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COMMENT

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Evans says that a podium finish on Rally Mexico has given him a confidence booster

EVANS NEEDS TO WAVE THE FLAG

Twenty-one years is a long time to wait for a home-grown winner of the World Rally Championship but Richard Burns' success in 2001 remains the last time a driver from these isles won the top title in the mixed-surface discipline.

Elfyn Evans is our major hope and the Welshman has twice finished as runner-up in the points chase. By his own admission – and that of team boss Jari-Matti Latvala – Evans has struggled since the introduction of hybrid systems into the WRC, which came into the championship at the beginning of 2022. As well as that, Evans had to look on from the other side of the service park as the sister machine of young sensation Kalle Rovanpera swept all before him in 2022. It has been a tough few seasons for Eflyn, who needs desperately to recapture the form he displayed in 2020 and 2021.

After finishing on the podium in the last round, Rally Mexico, Evans has reported that he has found a new level of confidence in the Rally1 Yaris and he is ready to go on the attack over the remaining 10 rounds of this season. That is great news and, thanks to his consistency, he is only 12 points adrift of the title summit. There is plenty left to fight for and, with the sister car of table-topper Sebastian Ogier only doing a part-campaign in 2023, Evans is only, effectively, nine points away from his greatest rival for the crown, Hyundai racer Thierry Neuville. If Evans can turn up the heat, it would be a breath of fresh air for UK rallying fans.

In this issue, motorsport's great all-rounder Jackie Oliver takes the chair for the MN readers' questions. The former Lotus Formula 1 man is candid in his responses and lifts the lid on what was a vastly different era of racing. As well as his decorated career behind the wheel, Oliver went on to head up the Arrows attack in Formula 1 and has served with distinction in the British Racing Drivers' Club.

We round up as much of the national racing and rallying as we could from the Bank Holiday weekend, although the Monday afternoon deadline for Motorsport News means that the remainder of the British GT meeting from Oulton Park and the club race reports from Donington Park and Castle Combe, as well as 5 Nations British Rallycross and National Hot Rods from Ipswich, will be published in our April 20 edition. Reserve your copy now.

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RACING NEWS

Photos: Motorsport Images

Australia was strong for the Merc drivers

Russell says that upgrades will help him catch up to the Red Bulls

RUSSELL THINKS MERC CAN MAKE GAINS ON RED BULL

British driver is clear that his team will make inroads into deficit

By Matt James

Mercedes star George Russell has recanted his claim that rival squad Red Bull will win every race in the 2023 campaign after a promising showing in the recent Australian Grand Prix.

After the opening round of the year in Bahrain, Russell said that he thought Red Bull would win every race in the 2023 roster, but has now reappraised the situation and is confident that the German marque will be able to hit back later in the season.

Russell said: "I do still think Red Bull are a class ahead of everybody else and for sure, Lewis and I got the most out of it [on Saturday in Australia when they lined up second and third].

"By the sounds of what Max Verstappen is saying, there was probably still a little bit more in the locker [for Red Bull]. We're talking that three tenths. Normally, they're a second ahead. Now, they're three tenths ahead. That's still a huge amount in the world of F1."

Russell said that the Brackley-based team would continue to push for upgrades to the W14 machine over the next few races, and the British ace thinks that the improvements could push them even closer to the ultimate pace.

"We're not going to give up, we're going to keep on pushing," said Russell, who led the early part of the race in Australia. "Right now, we'll have to reassess [the claim] when we bring some upgrades to the car. That will be the first time when we truly know if they work as we expect."

FERRARI REFUSES TO PRESS THE PANIC BUTTON IN F1

Ferrari has scotched talk that it will devise a B-spec machine later this season as it aims to return to the front of the pack.

The Italian team has under-performed this year so far. Carlos Sainz's fourth-place finish in the opening grand prix of the season in Bahrain is the Prancing Horse's best result. It is in fourth place in the constructors' contest.

New team principal Frederic Vasseur told Autosport that the Scuderia was expecting evolutions to the car to improve the performance as the year goes on.

Vasseur said: "We have a flow of updates that will come, not for Baku, because we have the aero package for the level of downforce, and with the sprint race it is not the easiest one, but for Miami, Imola, not Monaco, and Barcelona. At each race, we'll have an update on the car."

● Ferrari has launched an appeal against Carlos Sainz's five-second penalty at the Australian GP which dropped him from fourth to 12th. The Spanish driver was sanctioned for contact with Fernando Alonso's Aston Martin.

Ferrari has struggled this year

Massa missed crown in 2008

MASSA LOOKS AT OPTIONS AFTER 2008 F1 TITLE REVELATIONS

The 2008 Formula 1 World championship runner up Felipe Massa is exploring legal options after it has been revealed that the sport's governing body, the FIA, could have taken action regarding Nelson Piquet Jr's crashgate accident at Singapore.

Piquet crashed deliberately to assist Renault team-mate Fernando Alonso's path to victory in Singapore and the scandal rocked the sport. In a recent interview, former F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone said that the governing body had information that the crash happened on purpose but took no action. If the race had been deleted from the record books, Ferrari driver Massa would have beaten Lewis Hamilton to the title.

Ecclestone said: "We decided not to do anything. We wanted to protect the sport and save it from a huge scandal. That's why I used angelic tongues to persuade my former driver Nelson Piquet Sr to keep calm for the time being.

"There was a rule that a World championship classification after the FIA awards ceremony at the end of the year was untouchable. So Lewis Hamilton was presented with the trophy and everything was fine.

"We should have cancelled the race. That means it would never have happened for the championship standings. Then Felipe Massa would have been world champion."

AITKEN AND KVYAT LINED UP FOR FE TESTING

Formula E teams will run two drivers each at the Berlin Tempelhof track on April 24, a day after the second of the Berlin EPrix double-headers, in an exclusive test session and Briton Jack Aitken is among the racers lined up to sample the cars.

Ex-Williams F1 academy driver Aitken will run for Envision Racing and told MN that Formula E was "definitely a consideration" in his future career. The 27-year-old is currently racing in IMSA and DTM for the Action Express and Emil Frey teams respectively.

Daniil Kvyat, although not officially confirmed for the test, is expected to run with the NIO 333 squad, while Zane Maloney will appear for the Avalanche Andretti team alongside reigning Indy Lights champion Linus Lundqvist.

Maloney, who is racing for the Rodin Carlin team in F2 this season, is managed by the same company, ADD Management, as current Formula E racers Jake Dennis and Sacha Fenestraz.

Aitken will swap a Formula 1 machine for Formula E test

Hamilton is pivotal to Merc

MERC SAYS IT HAS NO PLANS IF LEWIS QUITS

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff has admitted that Mercedes F1 team has no back-up plan should seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton decide to walk away from the sport at the end of his contract, which runs out at the end of this season.

Hamilton has already said this year that he is happy at the Brackley-based team alongside countryman George Russell, but some insiders think that the 38-year-old might decide to retire at the end of 2023.

Wolff told Autosport that his preferred option is to retain Hamilton, who joined the Mercedes team in 2013. Wolff said: "I think it may sound naive, but I really struggle to think of a Plan B, if my Plan A is still the one that is my favourite.

"I don't want to engage in discussions with other drivers, because I'm happy with the ones that are in the team, that's for sure. At the moment, there is no Plan B. It's Lewis."

Wolff added that if Hamilton decided to walk away, he was certain that the team would know well in advance.

Edwards will join Hard

EDWARDS CONTINUES BTCC JOURNEY WITH TEAM HARD ATTACK

British Touring Car Championship battler Jade Edwards will return to the tin-top category in 2023 after securing a deal to drive for Team Hard.

The 33-year-old had competed for the BTC Racing squad over the last two seasons and finished 10th in the Independents Trophy last term with a best result of 15th on the Brands Hatch Indy circuit. The Ascot racer also placed fifth in the Jack Sears Trophy for drivers who had yet to achieve a podium. She is eligible for that contest again in 2023.

"I'm really excited to be joining Team Hard," said Edwards. "I have been following the team's progress for a while and I am impressed with their professionalism and commitment to success. I'm confident that I will be able to build on my experience and work well with the team to achieve some great results on track."

Team boss Tony Gilham said: "[Jade] is an exceptional driver with a lot of potential, and we believe she will be a great asset to our team. We are ready to provide her with the best platform to have her best season in the BTCC."

SPONSOR SEEKS MONEY BACK FROM WILLIAMS F1

Former Williams sponor ROKiT is suing the British team for $149 million after it claims that a lack of performance by the team in 2019 has damaged its reputation.

The mobile phone company says that Williams, which was then under the control of Claire Williams, had promised a competitive car even though it knew it did not have the resources to provide a front-running chassis. ROKiT was the headline sponsor in 2019 and then extended its deal for a further two seasons. There was a disagreement during the Covid-hit season in 2020. ROKiT offered to pay a proportion of the budget during the shortened season.

ROKiT boss Jonathan Kendrick told Autosport: "When Covid hit and the whole [2020] season was cancelled, that's why we didn't pay them. And then the season was only going to be 50%. So we offered 50% in writing.

"And they refused and immediately after that cancelled our whole contract."

ROKiT and Williams in battle…

TEAM DYNAMICS TO SIT OUT THE 2023 BRITISH TOURING CAR CONTEST

Title-winning team to take a sabbatical from top-line tin-top competition

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Steve Hindle, Motorsport Images

Shedden is out of a drive

Matt Neal's race team will turn its back on the BTCC for this season

By Matt James

Leading British Touring Car Championship outfit Team Dynamics is facing a year on the sidelines as it has been unable to secure the budget to return to the tin-top grid.

The two-car squad has been an ever-present on the BTCC entry list since 2003 and has taken team boss Matt Neal to three championship titles, while Gordon Shedden has also won a trio of drivers' crowns with the squad.

Shedden drove for the team last season and was a race winner, while Dan Rowbottom, who raced the second Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R, has switched to the Motorbase Performance team.

In a statement last week, Neal said that commercial factors were behind the decision to step away from the category in 2023, but the team would continue to offer technical support to the One Motorsport operation, which is due to run three Honda Civic Type Rs for Aiden Moffat, Josh Cook and an as-yet unnamed third driver.

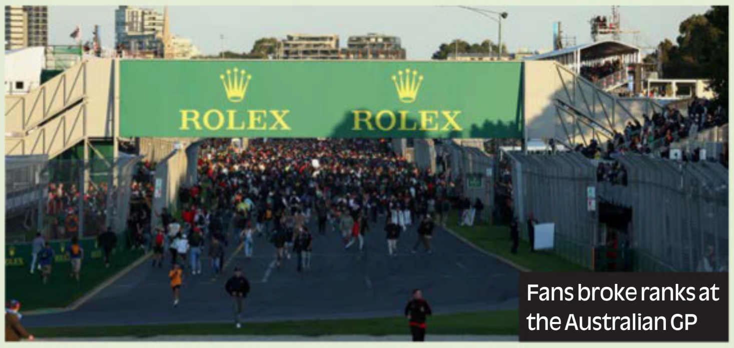
In a statement, Neal said: "This has been an extremely difficult decision for us to make as a business.

"Unfortunately, with the current economic climate, we have not been able to secure the commercial partnerships we required to commit to the forthcoming BTCC season. I've been in the BTCC all my life and it has presented us with many fantastic opportunities and memories, so I'm extremely disappointed that we will not be directly involved and saddened for our dedicated employees, partners, fans and supporters.

"However, we still want to keep the Honda brand at the forefront of racing and ultimately winning races.

"Under our tenure, the car marque became one of the most successful manufacturers in the championship, second only to Ford in just half as many years. So, we aim to put to good use our resources and developments made over the winter by supporting One Motorsport in 2023 and helping them to win races and challenge for the Drivers' and Teams' championships."

The withdrawal of Team Dynamics means that Shedden is unlikely to appear on the grid again this term.



Fans broke ranks at the Australian GP

AUSTRALIAN GP BOSSES LAUNCH TRACK INVASION PROBE

The organisers of the Australian Grand Prix have promised to investigate post-race scenes in Melbourne when fans invaded the track before the event had officially finished.

Enthusiasts stormed onto the Albert Park track while the cars were on the slowing down lap and others climbed over fences to make their way onto the Tarmac.

The sport's governing body, the FIA, said the incident was a serious breach of the sporting code.

The chief executive of the Australian Grand Prix Corporation, Andrew Westacott, said: "There's a controlled allowance of people to come on to the track after the race has concluded and after the safety car passes. Spectators had broken one of the lines, we don't know how that's occurred just yet.

"We've got a lot of CCTV and we've got a huge amount of footage we're going to have to pour through over the next couple of weeks. Motorsport is dangerous – it could have been horrific.

"Nobody does anything malicious at motorsport, it's an unbelievably well-behaved crowd but they, I think, had a degree of confusion."

Race organisers have also been criticised by a spectator who suffered a cut to his arm when he was struck by a piece of debris from Haas driver Kevin Magnussen's car.

HAMILTON JOINS THE MASSED RANKS OF TEAM HARD'S BTCC FLEET

Nic Hamilton will return to the British Touring Car Championship this season at the wheel of a Team Hard-run Cupra R as the Kent team expands to run six machines in 2023.

Hamilton, 31, will enter his fifth full season in the headline tin-top category and his third at the wheel of the two-litre turbocharged Cupra R.

He will join Dexter Patterson, Jack Butel, Bobby Thompson, Dan Lloyd and new recruit Jade Edwards in the expanding team. "I am so grateful and blessed to be back on the BTCC grid with Team Hard for 2023," said Hamilton. "Continuity is everything and I feel right at home with the team, as I look to develop the improving pace I found in 2022.

"Both the car and team look to be in a great position going into this year and so I cannot wait to get started and work alongside both my returning and new team-mates."

Nic Hamilton will return to the tin-top grid as he rejoins Team Hard

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Our 12-page special breaks down the barriers to motorsport competition, starts p15

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Brackley-based team plots evolution to regain lost ground to Red Bull and Ferrari

MERCEDES AIMS TO BOUNCE BACK BY STICKING TO DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Wraps came off the new Mercedes W14 racer

By Matt James

Mercedes F1 bosses say the team's new W14 design has ironed out the flaws from its 2022 challenger and will give drivers Lewis Hamilton and George Russell the chance to fight for grand prix wins.

The team slipped to third in the constructors' chase last year after eight straight constructors' titles. The 2022 W13 was prone to bouncing in the early part of the campaign but work by engineers ironed out the phenomenon by the end of the campaign.

Now the new W14 has taken design philosophies from the previous machine and team chiefs say it will be a step forward.

Technical director Mike Elliott said: "At times last year, we were questioning ourselves and saying: 'Do we have to tear it all up and start again?' But you know if you do that, you are going to go backwards. Although we had problems last year, we know there is a lot of goodness in the car.

"We've looked at the problems we had last year and how best to ensure we solved them."

Full story, page 4

Lewis Hamilton

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PREVIEW

STARS TO SHINE AT RACE RETRO

We look ahead to the historic showpiece, p14

INTERVIEW

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Photos: Jakob Ebrey, GT4 European Series, Graham Holbon Photography

Day starred in British GT

Rising star seeks title charge after sampling GT4 European Series last year

DAY SEEKS GT4 EUROPEAN CROWN

British GT's 2022 breakout star seeks title as he makes continental switch

By Graham Keilloh

Rising star Jamie Day is seeking a GT4 European Series championship title in 2023 as he steps to continental competition full-time following his impressive British GT bow last year.

Day drove an R Racing Aston Martin Vantage GT4 on his GT debut alongside fellow teenager Josh Miller, and the duo won two races and challenged for the British GT4 title right to the final race. Day's breakout showing also got him shortlisted for Motorsport News's 2022 rising star of the year.

Late last year Day also sampled GT4 European Series in its Barcelona double-header, in a Mirage Racing Vantage driving alongside Ruben del Sarte, a drive arranged by Day's coach British GT champion Jamie Caroline.

Day, 17, now embarks on a full GT4 European campaign, still in a Mirage Vantage Silver Cup pairing, but now alongside fellow Aston Martin Academy driver Rory van der Steur from the USA.

Day told MN: "I enjoyed it a lot with them [Mirage last year]. Going into this season, going with Mirage again it'll be a good shout to go with them, as they've been fast in previous years and we were fast there when I raced with them in Barcelona.

"[Van der Steur] is a good team-mate, he's fast, and I think we'll be looking to go for the championship, as everyone does. It's a good strong partnership and in an Aston car, which we know is fast, has been fast from previous years, we've got a good strong line-up."

Sixteen-year-old has stepped up to Minis after JSCC crown

JSCC CHAMP HALL IN MINI SWITCH

Reigning Junior Saloon Car champion Maximus Hall is racing in the Mini Challenge Trophy in 2023 staying with Westbourne Motorsport for his second car-racing season.

The 16-year-old is fresh from becoming only the second-ever driver to clinch the JSCC title in their rookie campaign, taking 10 wins in his Westbourne Motorsport-run Citroen Saxo.

Hall also got the Peter Collins Trophy annual award for the British Automobile Racing Club's most promising newcomer.

Hall said: "Last year was simply incredible. Westbourne were amazing and it feels right to embark on this next step with them.

"I'm under no illusions that this will be a big jump up but I'm more than confident we can have a good season. I'm going to take it one round at a time, soak up as much as I can behind the wheel and see what results we can go after."

TRUCK RACERS SWITCH TO SUSTAINABLE FUEL

The British Truck Racing Championship will use a more sustainable fuel from this season via a partnership with a leading provider using fuel made from waste cooking oils and fats.

BTRC has inked a partnership with high-performance Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil fuel provider Green Biofuels (GBF), and every driver is to be provided with the firm's Gd+ fuel at each round.

The fuel is designed as a straightforward and clean diesel alternative, and does not require machinery upgrades. It is made from 100% waste-derived cooking oils and fats and supercharged with an engine-enhancing additive. No virgin crops are required for its production and it has no impact on land use. GBF already supplies its HVO fuel to DPD and Coca-Cola among others.

Steve Thomas, director of BTRC promoter Truck Sport UK, said: "This is not only a big announcement for the sport but also the industry as a whole. As one of the premier motorsport series in the UK it is only right that we stand up and make an impact in the correct way.

"Carving out a sustainable pathway is pivotal for the future of the sport. This is just the first step in our sustainability plans and we're looking forward to growing this relationship over the coming years."

Gd+
Gd+
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Fuel made from waste cooking oils and fats now provided to truck racers

IN BRIEF

Aston's Brits

Last year's British GT R Racing Aston Martin GT4 pair Jamie Day and Josh Miller have been retained in the marque's Academy for 2023. They are joined by Miller's new R Racing partner Seb Hopkins, plus fellow Britons Casper Stevenson and Ben Tuck from FIA WEC GTE and European Le Mans GTE respectively.

Shepherd in

TCR UK race-winner Adam Shepherd was a late addition to TCR UK's grid with his Area Motorsport Hyundai i30 for Snetterton's season opener last weekend. Shepherd, who last year completed the fastest-ever TCR lap in the UK on the way to seventh in the standings, hopes to fight for the championship though his budget currently only covers the first few rounds.

Camp pitches

The 2021 Civic Cup champion Alistair Camp made his debut in the TCR UK championship last weekend at Snetterton after a last-minute deal with Pro Alloys Racing to drive a Hyundai i30. Camp, who also raced in the Civic Cup at the Norfolk meeting, also sampled a Cupra plus an Area Motorsport-run i30 in TCR UK pre-season testing.

Fiesta celebration

The Fiesta Junior championship achieved its biggest-ever entry of 22 cars at its Snetterton curtain-raiser last weekend. Fourteen of the drivers raced in its rookie cup. Fiesta Junior coordinator Laura Payne told Motorsport News in early 2023 that 20-car grids were expected in the TCR UK-supporting contest for 14-17-year-olds.

Toro Verde's two

Toro Verde GT has a two-car entry for 2023's Porsche Carrera Cup GB: Pro-Am's category debutant and ex-Radical racer Frazer McFadden plus experienced Porsche racer David Fairbrother in Am. Last year the team's full-time racer Angus Whiteside finished third in Pro-Am, while British GT champions Ian Loggie and Ross Wylie also appeared.

Oulton update

It has been confirmed that Caterham 310R drivers Roger Gaunt and Duncan Cooke, involved in a sizeable Oulton Park accident 10 days ago, escaped serious injury. Cooke was soon released from hospital and while Gaunt was kept in for observation his family confirmed he had returned home late last week, and while his memory had not yet fully returned he is making good progress.

HEDLEY SEALS ARDEN GB3 DEAL

Eight-time British Formula 4 race-winner James Hedley sealed a race seat in Arden VRD's three-car line-up for last weekend's GB3 season opener at Oulton Park.

The 19-year-old confirmed to Motorsport News last month he was seeking an Arden drive, having been third fastest at GB3's media day test with the team. He followed that up by topping Snetterton testing with a best time seven tenths clear of the rest.

Ginetta Junior champion Hedley took four British F4 race wins in both 2020 and in '21, and in the latter season was the points leader for much of the early part of the year. He graduated full-time to GB3 last year, with Elite then JHR, and finished 17th in the table.

Hedley said: "Our pre-season testing pace shows we mean business and, although it's been a late deal to put together, I feel well prepared to challenge for wins and podiums. To be working with a team like Arden VRD is a milestone in my career."

Hedley's Oulton hello

Mills: three is magic number

MILLS IN FOR OULTON OPENER

Tom Mills joined GB4's grid at Oulton Park last weekend in the third car of his dad's reigning champion KMR Sport team alongside full-time Jeremy Fairbairn and Jack Clifford.

Boss Kevin Mills told Motorsport News last month that the team – recently renamed from Kevin Mills Racing – has a third GB4 car available for the first time. Mills Jr in it dominated media day testing.

Yet Kevin added that Tom, who finished fourth in 2022's inaugural GB4 championship with the team, would not get to race the car without sponsor investment, and that he was looking for a customer for the car. Mills Jr though got to race it in GB4's Cheshire triple header.

Mills Jr said: "I can't commit to a full campaign right now, but the racing in GB4 last year was some of the most fun I've ever had."

Mills Sr added: "We all know what he's capable of. However of more importance to the team as a whole is that he can also be of great benefit to Jack and Jeremy."

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

GB3 got quarter century of cars

FORTY SINGLE-SEATERS RACE AT OULTON PARK

Highest-ever grids hit for GB3 and GB4 in Cheshire curtain raiser

By Graham Keilloh

Forty single-seater cars across GB3 and GB4 raced at the categories' Oulton Park curtain-raiser meeting last weekend with 25 and 15 cars respectively, a record for both, taking part.

GB3's grid was bolstered with James Hedley confirming his Arden drive on the eve of the Oulton weekend *(see separate story)*. Its 25-car turnout was the highest in the category's history and is believed to be the largest single-class entry at the top-class British Formula 3 level in the UK since the early 1970s.

While British F3 grids reached the mid-20s in the 1990s and 2000s, those entries were across two classes.

GB3 grids last year were consistently at 20-plus and peaked with 23 cars at its Silverstone round. That total, including those from predecessor categories, was only beaten in the championship's 2013 debut year, under its BRDC F4 title, when 24 competed at Brands Hatch.

GB3's sister championship GB4 meanwhile at Oulton, for the first race of its second season, got its biggest-ever grid at 15. This was achieved with several last-minute additions *(see separate stories)* and beat its highest turnout of 14 from last year.

MSV chief executive Jonathan Palmer said: "[It] proves just what a compelling proposition [GB3] is for drivers. GB3 fills the gap between F4 and F3 superbly, with an unrivalled blend of performance, reliability and equality at an outstandingly low cost.

"Between GB3 and GB4 40 drivers [raced at] Oulton Park, proof that the UK is well and truly back as an outstanding proving ground for grand prix drivers of the future.

Palmer says UK is "proving ground"

Alva has Ferrari and FIA Games background

FORTEC RECRUITS FOR GB4

Champion Fortec Motorsport has recruited Indian rising star Ruhaan Alva and karting graduate Aditya Kulkarni to form a three-car GB4 line-up.

The pair join Formula Ford shootout winner Colin Queen at the squad that took Nikolas Taylor to last year's inaugural GB4 drivers' title.

Alva, 16, was selected last year for Ferrari Driver Academy Asia-Pacific zone trials plus represented India at the FIA Motorsport Games in the Formula 4 category.

Kulkarni, 15, joins Fortec from the British Karting Championship, where he most recently placed seventh in a 73-driver field in Junior Rotax. He also in 2021 took 'O' plate title success in Junior TKM and won the TKM Festival.

ELITE GETS GB4 DRIVER PAIR

Ginetta Junior graduate Harri Reynolds and British Formula 4 racer Josh Irfan were both late additions to race in last weekend's GB4 Oulton Park season opener for Elite Motorsport.

Both were signed up for the Cheshire round only. Reynolds – who finished fourth in Ginetta Junior's standings last year – is hopeful though of getting the budget to complete further GB4 rounds.

Karting graduate Irfan meanwhile competed at Oulton to get more single-seater race time before he starts his full-time British F4 season competing with Carlin at Donington Park next weekend.

Reynolds told MN: "Definitely we're looking to do as much of the championship as we can, and with Elite we can fight for the championship so that's going to be our aim. Just the first one [round is confirmed], and then we'll decide closer to the time with the others."

Irfan told MN of his appearance: "[It's] mostly because I haven't actually done any single-seater racing before so it's just to get some experience in racing, that's the main thing."

When asked if he intended only to do the Oulton round in GB4, Irfan said: "Yeah, so far, as of yet."

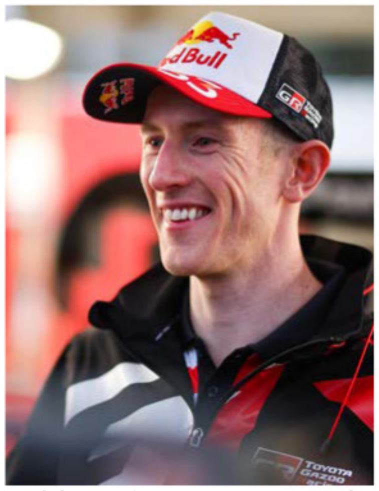
Reynolds says he can fight for championship

BRIT EVANS STILL IN WORLD TITLE HUNT AHEAD OF CROATIA RETURN

Welshman convinced podium comeback has reignited faltering championship hopes

Photos: FIAWRC.com, Red Bull Content Pool, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Evans thinks he is now flying high


Welshman is now encouraged

By Graham Lister

Elfyn Evans reckons a first World Rally Championship title is still in his grasp ahead of the European season beginning in earnest in Croatia next week.

The Welshman is 12 points behind Toyota team-mate and leader Sebastien Ogier after three rounds following his third place in Mexico in mid-March.

Evans, who has taken the WRC runner-up spot on two occasions, is fifth in the current order, three points behind M-Sport's Rally Sweden winner Ott Tanak.

"We're getting there now," said the 34-year-old, whose previous podium finish was on Belgium's Ypres Rally last August. "We're definitely moving in the right direction with the car and with my driving and with the set-up. Things are improving all around and we're finding some consistency."

Evans could have been closer to the title summit had he not been forced to nurse a bent suspension arm for much of the deciding leg in Mexico. The issue cost him and co-driver Scott Martin second place and a shot at bonus points on the Powerstage.

"It's frustrating to miss second, but we were carrying the problem with the bent suspension arm," said Evans. "It meant we couldn't really attack the stages as much as we wanted or needed. But everything's open with the championship, which is good."

Toyota Gazoo team boss Jari-Matti Latvala praised his British driver's determination in Mexico: "Elfyn was unlucky at the end but to be back on the podium gives him good confidence for the future. You could see on his face that he had this fighting spirit."

Evans lost out on winning the first Croatia Rally to count for the WRC in 2021 by 0.6 seconds after an error almost in sight of the finish of the final stage allowed Ogier to get ahead. He placed fifth 12 months ago following two punctures.

SCOTLAND HOMECOMING KEY TO MAX McRAE'S JUNIOR ERC CHANCES

Max McRae believes relocating to Scotland will boost his chances of Junior ERC success this season.

The 18-year-old, who is chasing the 2024 Junior WRC prize drive on offer for claiming the European championship's young driver title, will move from Perth in Western Australia to Lanark in Scotland for the six-event Junior ERC season.

"I love Australia and I love rallying in Australia, but Europe is the place to be if you're looking to build a career in this sport – and I'm determined to make a career in this sport," said McRae.

"Coming back to Lanark is so cool. The family are there and the rally family too. But the thing I can't wait for is to meet everybody from The Racing Factory and, of course, to drive the Corsa for the first time.

"I've talked a lot with [the team] and I can't thank Aloisio [Monteiro] and Miguel [Ribeiro, team principal] for everything they have already done.

"Those guys know so much about competing in Rally4. But, at the same time, they have huge knowledge of the levels above. It's a fantastic opportunity."

McRae is due to test his Opel Corsa Rally4 in Portugal at the end of April.

Breen wants more glory

BREEN HAS POINTS GAP TO MAKE UP IN PORTUGAL

Craig Breen will play catch up when the Portuguese championship resumes on Rali Terras d'Aboboreira from April 28-29.

Breen, who claimed top Portuguese points on the season-opening Rally Serras de Fafe last month, crashed out of second place on stage two of Rallye Casinos do Algarve at the start of April. That has left the Team Hyundai Portugal driver 17 points behind leader Miguel Correia.

Co-driven by fellow Irishman James Fulton, Breen will be back on World championship duty with the factory Hyundai squad on the Croatia Rally prior to Rali Terras d'Aboboreira, which also counts as a European Rally Trophy round.

Greensmith has hit the ground running in his WRC2 title challenge

GREENSMITH SETS OUT HIS WRC2 STRATEGY

Gus Greensmith has revealed his masterplan for taking the WRC2 title this season.

The Briton made a winning start to his WRC2 bid with victory in Mexico last month, his first World championship outing since he dropped down from the top-level Rally1 category at the end of 2022.

"The goal is to win as many events as possible," said the 26-year-old. "We're not looking at a long journey through the year. I'm only looking at [it] event by event. And I feel that that creates a greater focus and a better chance of becoming World champion at the end of the year."

Greensmith, who drives a Skoda Fabia RS Rally2 for Toksport WRT, added: "It was the perfect start to the year for all of us and the best thing about the weekend was when we wanted to go fast, we could pull away from everyone. And then when we had the gap, all we had to do was manage it. And I felt like I had such a strong package that I didn't need to push very hard to keep the gap opening behind me. So that's something I've not had in my career and it's purely down to a good combination of car and driving."

Greensmith prepared for next week's Croatia Rally by finishing second to team-mate Nikolay Gryazin on the Croatian championship Rally Karlovac recently. While Chris Patterson returned to co-driving duty there, Jonas Andersson will be back for the Croatia Rally.

KIWI PADDON COMMITS TO RALLY ISLAS CANARIAS AFTER TWEAKING ERC SCHEDULE

European championship leader Hayden Paddon has canned plans to skip next month's Rally Islas Canarias, reasoning that it's too early in the season to drop a round.

ERC rules allow drivers to count their best seven scores out of a possible eight. New Zealander Paddon had planned to skip the island event, which takes place from May 4-6, owing to his congested calendar and a lack of Tarmac mileage in the Hyundai i20 N Rally2 he drives.

But he's since had a change of heart following a meeting with his BRC Racing Team.

"We met with the team to discuss what was going to strengthen our title bid the most and, while originally, we planned to have Canarias as our 'drop' round, we decided together it was too early in the season for that," said the BRC Racing Team driver, who won the season-opening Rally Serras de Fafe last month.

Paddon aims to capitalise on a strong start to European championship

PAYNE AIMING AT ANOTHER BTRDA MAXIMUM IN WALES

BTRDA stars heads to classic stages in the principality for round two of series

Photos: Ben Lawrence, Jakob Ebrey, Kevin Money

Payne has his sights on Welsh success

By Paul Lawrence

Elliot Payne, Arron Newby and Matthew Hirst are the leading contenders for the second round of the BTRDA Rally Series, as the championship makes its first visit of the season to Wales.

Saturday's Rallynuts Stages will pit around 130 crews against the classic stages of Myherin and Hafren from a base in Builth Wells and it is Payne who heads the points after the opening Malcolm Wilson Rally.

Yorkshire youngster Payne will be tough to beat as he bids to retain his BTRDA crown with his Ford Fiesta Rally2. However, Newby and Hirst, who finished the Malcolm Wilson split by just four tenths of a second, will both be on the attack.

Hirst has already shown his pace in Wales with victory on the recent Rally North Wales. On the 2022 Rallynuts, Hirst took an impressive victory over Payne and is eager to repeat that result as well as bank more Welsh Rally Championship points.

Others in the mix include Ian Bainbridge (Fiesta Rally2), Freddie Milne (Skoda Fabia R5) and Alistair Ginley in his ex-Payne Fiesta Rally2. From Northern Ireland comes James Leckey in another Fiesta R5 on first foray to Wales for nearly 30 years while Russ Thompson (Mitsubishi Lancer E9) will bid for Class B13 and try and get right up among the overall pacesetters. Taking the fight to Thompson on his seasonal debut will be Daniel Moss in his Lancer E10.

JIM CLARK RALLY UNVEILED TO RECORD INTEREST

The organisers of the Jim Clark Rally say that interest in the event is running at an all-time high as entries opened for the May 26-28 event.

The closed-road special stage event in the Scottish borders is the only UK rally this year to be a round of the British Rally Championship, the Protyre Asphalt Championship and the Scottish Rally Championship. The BRC entry will be headed by French WRC contender Adrien Fourmaux in a Ford Fiesta Rally2 from the M-Sport squad.

The BRC and Protyre contenders will compete on the main event, which opens on Friday evening with two runs over the Longformacus stage before moving to the west of host town Duns for Saturday's stages of Edrom, Ayton and Fogo. A total of 61 competitive miles will make up the rally.

On Sunday, the SRC contenders will compete over 41 miles on the Westruther, Scott's View and Eccles stages in the Reivers Rally, which has a compact six-hour format.

Dan Wright, chairman of the organisers, said: "Interest in the rally is at an all-time high. To keep the event fresh, there is a switch around in the route, meaning everyone can enjoy some new stages."

There's more than 60 stage miles on the Jim Clark Rally

MORRIS RALLIES IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND BACK-TO-BACK

A tired Morris was alongside O'Donovan at Cadwell

Ashleigh Morris rallied in two countries over the first weekend of April, driving on the Rallye Du Grasse in the South of France on Saturday then co-driving on the Alan Healy Memorial Rally at Cadwell Park on Sunday.

Morris told MN: "I flew out to France to do the recce the week before and spent the Wednesday testing with Matt Edwards, before doing the rally on Friday and Saturday." In France she had Martin Haggett co-driving.

"I was in a Peugeot 208 Rally4 with Racing Solutions and we were competing on some of the Monte Carlo Stages," she added.

It was her first rally abroad, first time in a Rally4 car, first time making her own notes and second rally in a left-hand-drive car.

"We were fifth in Rally4 and I would possibly do it again, but then I had to fly from Nice to Heathrow. I left my car at Ollie's [O'Donovan] and he drove us to Cadwell as I only had about three hours' sleep," she said.

Morris and O'Donovan then finished third at Cadwell Park in their Hyundai i20 R5 to conclude a successful weekend.

BARRY SET FOR DRIVING DEBUT ON JIM CLARK RALLY

Motorsport News contributor Luke Barry will swap notepad and pen for a steering wheel when he makes his competitive driving debut on the Jim Clark Rally at the end of May.

Barry will drive a Ford Fiesta R2 from EDSL Sport and will tackle both the Jim Clark and the Jim Clark Reivers Rallies over the weekend.

Barry grew up watching events such as the Jim Clark and has since made a career as a professional rally journalist, but he will now sample the action from inside the car on what has always been one of his major local events.

He said: "Choosing the Jim Clark Rally was a no-brainer for me. Hopefully some local knowledge can make me look slightly less terrible than I will be!"

The 25-year old driver will also raise money for Diabetes UK as he was diagnosed as a type one diabetic more than 15 years ago.

NORTH WEST STAGES SET FOR 2024 RETURN

The date for the return of the Legend Fires North West Stages has been confirmed as March 23 next year after the rally took a sabbatical this year.

The popular Lancashire closed-road event will return to the rally calendar in March 2024 and will again be based at Myerscough College, with a ceremonial start in the centre of Garstang.

The organisers promise tweaks to several of the stages and a completely new 6.2-mile stage. An event spokesman said: "We would like to thank all residents, councils, landowners, local businesses, and sponsors for their continued support. I must also thank John Stone, our sponsor, who is always on hand to provide help and encouragement to the team."

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KELLY AIMS FOR SECOND WIN IN CRC FINALE AT ANGLESEY

Focus turns to the battle for second spot in the points table at Anglesey

Photos: Ben Lawrence, Kevin Money

By Paul Lawrence

Champion Mark Kelly will aim to make it two wins on the bounce when the Motorsport News-supported Circuit Rally Championship concludes at Anglesey on Sunday.

The SMC Stages has drawn a capacity 90-car entry to the North Wales circuit for the eighth and final event of the winter season and it is Kelly and Neil Colman who head the entry in their Skoda Fabia R5, fresh from victory last time out at Cadwell Park.

The title is already secure in the hands John Griffiths and Emma Morrison and they will miss the Anglesey event as they prepare to tackle the closed road Rally Tendring and Clacton a week later in their Ford Fiesta R5.

Instead, the focus will switch to the battle for second where Ollie O'Donovan (Hyundai i20 R5) holds the advantage. However, a win for Paul Murro (Ford Fiesta R5) could yet steal the place. A retirement at Cadwell Park after clobbering a gate has cost Michael Igoe (Ford Fiesta Rally2) a shot at beating O'Donovan to the runner-up position.

Among the two-wheel-drive cars, Alasdair Stables should top a fine season in his Vauxhall Chevette but a top-three overall result from James Garner (Darrian T90 GTR) could yet change the outcome.

O'Donovan is in prime position to take second in the points

Kelly was the form man on his Cadwell Park return

PRICE OVERCOMES ANOTHER SETBACK ON HIS LOCAL RALLY

Price suffered drama on his Micra's return

After a six-month rebuild following an accident on Rali Ceredigion last September, Gethin Price's Nissan Micra suffered more damage in an unfortunate incident on Rally North Wales.

Price spent all winter repairing the Micra ready for his local forest event, only for the front of the car to be damaged when they hit another competitor on a single-track road section after the Dyfnant stage. The other competitor, for some reason, was travelling against rally traffic at the time.

With the damage patched up, Price and co-driver Stephen Brown continued and salvaged a class W2 win with encouragement from fellow local driver and current British Rally champion Osian Pryce.

Price, who has only done seven rallies in the last four years, will now continue his Welsh Rally Championship campaign on Saturday's Rallynuts Stages.

BOGIE HOPING FOR NEW ESCORT DONEGAL DEBUT

David Bogie is hoping to have his brand-new modified Ford Escort Mk2 ready for June's Donegal International Rally but says he won't rush to make that happen.

Bogie, who is contesting a full Irish National season in his existing Mk2, has been developing an all-new build. So far, the Scotsman has completed a few component tests but is aware getting the car ready for competition could take time.

"Obviously we've started rallying again so that's going to push back to the development of the new car," Bogie told Motorsport News, "but because it is such a radical change there's a lot of things we need to get working so it definitely needs to be at its best before we take it out on the stages, which was always our plan.

"Rather than going and developing the car on the stages in front of the public eye I would rather do that behind the scenes, and it will come out when it's fit for purpose.

"When we're at a stage when we're really ready to push the car and get the best out the car then certainly that's when we'll make a plan on what rally we want to do," he added. "But ideally it would be nice if it was ready for Donegal."

ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

DAFIS AND DAVIES TAKES SLENDER WIN ON PEMBROKESHIRE CHALLENGE

Gethin Dafis/Llyr Davies took a narrow four-second win over Carwyn Adams/Dyfrig James on the Rali Bro Preseli at the start of the month.

The popularity of road rallying in West Wales was underlined by the fact that, despite only being open to non-expert crews, there were 111 entries for the 75 starting positions on Teifi Valley MC's annual novice rally.

Initially it appeared that Dafydd-Sion Lloyd and Chris Hill had taken a clear victory but, after observer reports were received by the organisers, they were one of nine crews disqualified for give way infringements.

Evan Shepherd/Jamie Wilson had been in second place behind Lloyd/Hill at Petrol, but dropped two minutes at TC18, which was timed to the minute, as their two nearest rivals Dafis/Davies and Carwyn Adams/Dyfrig James dropped just one. This left the latter two crews to battle for the win.

A hard-charging Adams/James closed to within four seconds at the end, but Dafis/Davies held on to take the top spot.

The NESCRO Championship reached its second round with the White Heather tests. The Wigton MC event was based entirely at Kirkbride Airfield and eight fastest test times allowed Barry Lindsay/Martin Petry to take a clear win. Fourth-placed Tom Hall/Andrew Fish were the winners in th3e historic category.

Ian Mills

Results

Rali Pro Preseli

Organiser: Teifi Valley Motor Club **When:** April 1-2 **Where:** Pembrokeshire **Route:** 95 miles **Starters:** 75.

1 Gethin Dafis/Llyr Davies (Ford Escort) 4m49s; 2 Carwyn Adams/Dyfrig James (Ford Escort) +4s; 3 Evan Shepherd/Jamie Wilson (Ford Sierra); 4 Hedd Wilshaw/Aled James (Ford Fiesta); 5 Wyn Mathias/Llyr Mathias (Vauxhall Astra); 6 Gareth Walters/Mark Hamilton (Ford Escort); 7 Aled Davies/Ethan Davies (Ford Puma); 8 Joshua Weston/Gethin Jones (Peugeot 106); 9 Iestyn Pynn/Sade Waudby (Proton Satria); 10 Richard James/Peter White (Ford Escort). **Class winners:** Davies/Davies; Iolo Phillips/Dion Phillips (Nissan Micra).

White Heather Tests

Organiser: Wigton Motor Club **When:** April 1 **Where:** Kirkbride Airfield **Championships:** NESCRO **Tests:** 20 **Starters:** 27.

1 Barry Lindsay/Martin Petry (Peugeot 206) 34m43s; 2 Chris Dodds/Peter Gibson (Mazda MX-5) +33s; 3 Philip Hodgson/Lewis Hodgson (Mazda MX-5); 4 Tom Hall/Andrew Fish (Riley Elf); 5 Robert Hargreaves/Andrew Graham (BMW Compact); 6 Matthew Burton/Sam Wigham (Mazda 2 Sport); 7 Kevin Stones/Christopher Holden (Toyota MR2); 8 Alex Willan/Paul Taylor (BMW 325i); 9 Tot Dixon/Nick Townley (Morris Mini); 10 Joe Harwood/Geoff Fletcher (Reliant Scimitar). **Class winners:** Hall/Fish; Willan/Taylor; Dixon/Townley; John Sloan/Alisdair Venn (Ford Escort); Helen Harkness/Heidi Garstang (Vauxhall Corsa).

LOOKOUT STAGES MELBOURNE: TRACKROD MOTOR CLUB BY PETER SCHERER APRIL 9

TAYLOR AND McNULTY KEEP THE BEST LOOKOUT ON MELBOURNE SHOWDOWN

Photos: Kevin Money

The Ford Fiesta Rally2 of Darrell Taylor and Steve McNulty managed to hold onto a day-long lead at Melbourne, but in the closing stages Damian and Charly Cole (Skoda Fabia R5+) came close to posing a late challenge.

Taylor was quickest on the first two stages to take an initial six-second lead over Cole, with 2022 winners Darren Nugent/Peter Johnson (Ford Fiesta) settling in third, after overcoming both Craig/Steven Renshaw (Subaru Impreza) and Dave Hornbrook/Ann Forster (Mitsubishi Lancer E4).

Cole managed to halve Taylor's lead on stage three and although Nugent couldn't live with the lead pair's pace, he managed to pull out a 16s gap over new fourth men Paul Morgan/Sam Stafford (Honda Civic). Hornbrook, Neil Weaver/James Bailey Corsa S1600) and Renshaw were next up, covered by just three seconds.

Taylor topped the times again on the next run and as they started stage four he was 10 seconds clear of Cole. While Nugent and Hornbrook held station, Weaver was delayed and that moved Renshaw back into the top six. Next it was Taylor's turn to be delayed and suddenly with two stages left the gap at the top was just three seconds and set up for a grandstand finish.

Cole's effort to close the gap further ended however a stage from home, when he sustained frontal damage, which left Taylor the victor by 10 seconds, with Nugent a solitary third.

Morgan lost both fourth overall and his Class 4 lead when his Civic expired on the final stage, which left Renshaw to take fourth, tied with Martin Farrar/Andy Ward (Subaru Impreza), while Hornbrook completed the top six.

In Class 1 Matt and Adrian Walk's Fiesta was never headed, while in Class 2 Weaver surrendered his Class 2 lead with damaged steering, handing victory to Chris Gravestock/Mark Harmer (Citroen C2). Mark Mazzitelli/Cath Booth (Ford Escort) topped Class 3 and Sandy Fairbairn/Ian Murray (BMW 325i) won Class 4.

Results

Organiser: Trackrod Motor Club **When:** April 9 **Where:** Melbourne Nr York **Championships:** ANCC; ANEMMC; ANWCC; AWMMC Heart of England; **Stages:** 7 **Starters:** 51.

1 Darrell Taylor/Steve McNulty (Ford Fiesta Rally2) 51m30s; 2 Damien Cole/Charly Cole (Skoda Fabia R5+) +10s; 3 Darren Nugent/Peter Johnson (Ford Fiesta); 4 Craig Renshaw/Steve Renshaw (Subaru Impreza); 5 Martin Farrar/Andy Ward (Subaru Impreza); 6 Dave Hornbrook/Ann Forster (Mitsubishi Lancer E4); 7 Mark Mazzitelli/Cath Booth (Ford Escort Mk2); 8 Stefan Morris/Chris Ridge (Ford Escort Mk2); 9 Chris Marshall/Andy Robinson (Mitsubishi Lancer E5) 10 Rob Watson/Josh Watson (Ford Escort Mk2). **Class winners:** Matt Walk/Adrian Walk (Ford Fiesta); Chris Gravestock/Mark Harmer (Citroen C2); Mazzitelli/Booth, Sandy Fairbairn/Ian Murray (BMW 325i).

Taylor withstood late pressure

SPORTING SCENE NEWS

BRISCA F2 ROUND-UP

Claydon wins big on holiday weekend

Staffordshire's Tristan Claydon enjoyed a profitable weekend in the south-west, taking BriSCA Formula 2 final wins at Taunton and the Bristol World Championship qualifying round.

On Good Friday at Taunton, exactly 49 years after the venue opened, Claydon made a good start and overhauled early leader Harry Neath-Rogers in the opening quarter of the contest. In a race with no stoppages, Claydon dealt well with constant traffic – and survived a late scare when a backmarker spun in front of him – to win from fellow lower-grader Julian Coombes and Sam Weston. Fifth-placed Tommy Farrell was the leading star-graded driver, as several struggled to make progress without a caution period.

At Bristol's traditional Easter Sunday event, it again didn't take long for Claydon to hit the front, as the star-graded drivers further back took lumps out of each other. Dan Roots, who claimed his maiden success at Skegness on Good Friday, caught Claydon and attempted to remove the leader on the final bend. But former Superstox racer Roots spun himself and allowed Claydon to escape to victory from Paul Moss and Charlie Guinchard, who was then excluded for being underweight. Gordon Moodie, the previous night's Cowdenbeath winner, inherited the position.

Mark Paulson

Results

Organiser: Autospeed **When:** April 7 **Where:** Smeatharpe Stadium, Taunton **Starters:** 42.
1 Tristan Claydon; 2 Julian Coombes; 3 Sam Weston; 4 Dale Moon; 5 Tommy Farrell; 6 Jessica Smith; 7 Jon Palmer; 8 Luke Wrench; 9 Matt Stoneman; 10 Joe Marquand.

Organiser: Skegness Raceway **When:** April 7 **Where:** Skegness Raceway **Starters:** 40.
1 Dan Roots; 2 David Shearing; 3 Charlie Guinchard; 4 Harley Thackra; 5 Adie Whitehead; 6 Conner Smith; 7 Kelvyn Marshall; 8 Ben Lockwood; 9 Caiden Morrison; 10 Tom Bennett.

Organiser: Spedeworth **When:** April 7 **Where:** Mildenhall Stadium **Starters:** 36.
1 Greg McKenzie; 2 Jack Issitt; 3 Josh Rayner; 4 Ben Chalkley; 5 Charlie England; 6 Aaron Patch; 7 Harry Hensby; 8 Sam Parker; 9 Gavin Mason; 10 Barry Clow.

Organiser: GMP Scotland **When:** April 8 **Where:** The Racewall, Cowdenbeath **Starters:** 17.
1 Gordon Moodie; 2 Chris Burgoyne; 3 Dan Roots; 4 Steven Burgoyne; 5 Craig Wallace; 6 Tom Bennett; 7 John Hogg; 8 Jason Blacklock; 9 Ryan McGill; 10 Craig Reid.

Organiser: Mendips Raceway **When:** April 9 **Where:** Mendips Raceway **Starters:** 39.
1 Tristan Claydon; 2 Paul Moss; 3 Gordon Moodie; 4 Tom Bennett; 5 Ryan Farquhar; 6 Paul Rice; 7 Charlie Fisher; 8 Dan Roots; 9 Kieren Bradford; 10 Ryan Gardiner.

Organiser: Yorstox **When:** April 9 **Where:** Owlerton Stadium, Sheffield **Starters:** 22.
1 Jack Witts; 2 Billy Webster; 3 Micky Brennan; 4 Andrew Palmer; 5 Jordon Thackra; 6 Kyle Taylor; 7 Ben Lockwood; 8 Harley Thackra; 9 Richard Howarth; 10 Josh Wilson.

MENZIES READY TO BID FOR FOURTH STRAIGHT HILLCLIMB CROWN

Gould racer prepared for epic fight with rivals for more silverware in 2023

Photos: Paul Lawrence, World RX, Tom Banks, Colin Casserley, MJ Pix

Menzies has the title in his sights

By Paul Lawrence

The British Hillclimb Championship is heading for another supremely competitive season as Wallace Menzies bids for a fourth straight title in his Gould GR59M.

With 30 top 12 run-offs across 14 events, it is another full-on year for the championship. Menzies starts as favourite but knows that a gaggle of challengers will be snapping at his heels.

Last year's runner-up Alex Summers and six-time champion Scott Moran are the two big rivals for Menzies, but Trevor Willis, Dave Uren, Sean Gould and rising star Matthew Ryder are all capable of toppling the big three.

Ryder showed impressive pace on occasions last year and will aim to build on that with greater consistency in his second season in a Gould GR59J.

Menzies told MN: "Everyone wants to win! I think it will be the most competitive championship ever. Alex is a given and Scott is really on it."

Adding another dimension is the fact that all of the leading contenders will be back on Avon tyres as Pirelli are currently unable to supply hillclimb tyres. For Menzies this is a particular challenge as all three of his titles have come on Pirellis.

With Will Hall returning in a Gould and a gaggle of rapid 1600cc and two-litre cars aiming for some giant-killing, it promises to be a spectacle. The season opens at Prescott on April 23 followed by rounds at Craigantlet.

HOT ROD MAN WOOD TEMPTED BY BriSCA AFTER TRIAL RUN

Former National Hot Rod World Final winner Billy Wood got his first taste of an 800bhp BriSCA F1 stockcar at a practice session at Skegness Raceway last weekend, and now says he would love to tackle a full-on race meeting.

The 2018 gold roof winner sampled regular racer Craig Finnikin's machine during a pre-meeting lapping session and said that he was blown away by the machine.

"It was a great experience, even though I was a bit squashed up in the cockpit," said Wood, who later went on to finish second in the Hot Rod final at the Lincolnshire track. "I was able to keep pace with [2022 World Final winner] Charlie Sworder so that was a good thing, although he pulled away a bit at the end.

"I have always said that I would like to have a go in one and I would in a meeting if I can find the time, and Craig said he would let me."

Finnikin, whose car was raced at Skegness by his daughter Lilly, will get a return run in Wood's Vauxhall Tigra in the future.

Wood sampled BriSCA F1 car

BAKKERUD FOR EURO OPENER IN HUNGARY

Bakkerud will return after signing late deal

Former European Rallycross champion and World Rallycross event-winner Andreas Bakkerud has signed a late deal to contest the opening round of the European Rallycross Championship in Hungary later this month.

The Norwegian, who finished second in the Nitro Rallycross Championship this year, will race an Audi S1 run by Karai Motorsport in the first round of the Euro RX series at Nyirad. The 2021 Euro RX title winner Bakkerud tested with the squad recently at the same venue and placed a last-minute entry for the European curtain-raiser as Tamas Karai's team-mate.

Bakkerud said: "Karai Motorsport might be a small, family-run team but they're very professional with it and have been fighting towards the front of the European Championship for several years now.

"They've done a fine job to develop the Audi themselves, and hopefully we managed to develop it a little bit more during the test. There are clearly still some areas that can be improved, but overall, I was very happy with the progress we made."

O'DONOVAN SETS SIGHT ON EURO GLORY TOO

Ollie will race the Iriz in Europe

Former British Rallycross champion and Euro RX podium finisher Ollie O'Donovan will compete in the European Rallycross Championship this season alongside his British Rallycross Championship effort.

The Irishman has reverted to his Team RX Racing squad's Proton Iriz RX Supercar. O'Donovan switched from the R5 rally-based machine to his previous Ford Focus midway through the British campaign last year but withdrew from European competition due to issues with the car. However, with those problems now resolved, O'Donovan will race the Proton through 2023.

His son, reigning British title-holder Patrick O'Donovan, is also due to compete in both the British and European series this year. Patrick won the second round of the Irish Championship last month, while O'Donovan Sr finished fifth in the opening round of the British series on Saturday at Lydden Hill.

"Last year didn't go as planned with the Proton, far from it, but the team has worked hard to resolve the problems that we encountered," said O'Donovan. "Euro RX will be very competitive this year but I want to get the best results I can, both for myself and to repay the effort that has gone into getting this car to a place we believe it should be."

BRISCA F1: SKEGNESS BY COLIN CASSERLEY **APRIL 7**

HINES MEANS WINS AT SKEGNESS AS HE OPENS HIS 2023 ACCOUNT

Paul Hines made his first BriSCA F1 appearance of the year count by winning the final on Good Friday at Skegness.

Simon Binder made the early running with George Elwell close behind. Elwell muscled his way into the lead on lap five. Further back, Hines was making his way through the pack with Tom Harris in pursuit.

Harris, who had won two heat races earlier in the night, had his race cut short when his front shock absorber broke, forcing him out of the race.

Hines inched closer to Elwell, eventually catching the race leader just after halfway. Elwell held off Hines' first attempt to barge him out of the way but was unable to hold Hines off a second time. Skegness Raceway promoter Rob Speak closed in on the leading duo in the final laps, but he couldn't get close enough to launch an assault for the lead. Winner Hines said: "Elwell is a tidy peddler and drove a great race, he kept me honest, and he deserves to go up the grades. I also heard the only reason Speak was racing was to put me in the wall, so I was trying my bloody hardest not to let him catch me."

Second place man Elwell said: "Hines was a couple of car lengths ahead at the end, I thought shall I have a dive at him? But then thought if I make a mess of it, I have ruined my race. I'm happy with second, got some more laps under my belt and maybe go for that dive later in the season."

Results

Organisers: Skegness Raceway, BriSCA F1 **Where:** Skegness Raceway **When:** April 7 **Starters:** 38
1 Paul Hines; 2 George Elwell; 3 Rob Speak; 4 Joe Nickolls; 5 Charlie Sworder; 6 Adam Joyce; 7 Chris Cowley; 8 Ant Lee; 9 Mat Newson; 10 Catherine Harris.

Hines kept out of bumper range from his F1 rivals

HISTORICS

DOWN THE PUB

ALEX BRUNDLE

Historic racer
Age: 32 **Lives:** Greenwich

Brundle has American muscle

He's now based in London
"I now live in Greenwich. But I still love King's Lynn and I go back. I couldn't live in London if I wasn't able to go back to Norfolk and have a bit of peace and quiet to be honest."

He loves historic racing
"I absolutely adore the historic stuff and it came mainly through a connection with Gary Pearson, who's been kind enough to let me drive his fleet of awesome historic cars. And then people keep on asking me to do stuff."

He had a Mustang built
"I basically ended up in the marketplace and thought I fancied a historic car. I looked at what was approachable for a guy like me. Obviously cost is an issue and the Mustang is just a genius bit of kit. In terms of horses for your buck, you can't get much better. We started testing it last year, and then intended to race it at the Silverstone Classic. I qualified it fifth but didn't get very far in the race with an engine issue, unfortunately. So Donington Park for Masters over Easter was its first full race appearance."

Pearsons did the build
"We've done a fair amount of testing where we're learning all the time. Obviously I rather put upon Gary because he is, as everyone will know, very much a Jaguar man. But I threw American muscle at him and I trust him implicitly. So he said he'd have a go at it. I imagine he turned around and went 'oh, no! What have I just agreed to?' But they've done a fabulous job with it and so we've done plenty of testing, trying to get the car sorted out."

He did get his hands dirty
"We started with a bare bodyshell and there is a sequence of videos on YouTube of me screwing bits to it. I cannot claim in any way to have to have built it, I just don't have the expertise, but I spent 10 to 14 days with the car, hammering bits on and mainly observing and fetching and carrying, but I was quite hands on."

There is a modern programme as well
"The plan is mainly to run it in Masters and we may even run it in the Pall Mall Cup later on. I'm also doing the Nurburgring with an Aston Martin customer team this year in a GT3 car, which is a bucket list thing of mine!"

PATRESE SET TO STAR IN BRABHAM AT GOODWOOD MEMBERS' MEETING

Italian veteran to tackle West Sussex extravaganza in iconic machine

Photos: Steve Jones, Paul Lawrence

Patrese will get into the cockpit of the gorgeous BT52 racer

By Paul Lawrence

Riccardo Patrese will be reunited with a Brabham BT52 from the 1983 season for some high-speed demonstration laps at Goodwood this weekend.

The Italian Formula 1 star will turn the clock back 40 years to drive the superb Gordon Murray design in celebration of what is believed to be the fastest-ever lap of Goodwood.

By 1983, Goodwood had been closed to racing for 17 years but was still used as a testing venue. Early in '83, the Brabham F1 team was testing the BT52 when Nelson Piquet reportedly lapped Goodwood in under a minute.

To mark 40 years since what may well have been the greatest-ever lap of Goodwood, two BT52s will be on hand for five-lap demonstration runs each day. To make it even more special, Patrese will be joined by Pedro Piquet (Nelson's son) to drive the two cars.

Another demonstration session at the 80th Members' Meeting will be dedicated to racing versions of the Porsche 911 as the marque, like the Sussex circuit, celebrates 75 years.

Two stand-out cars among 20 will be the 1973 Targa Florio-winning Carrera RSR and the 1998 Le Mans-winning 911 GT1. Record Le Mans winner Tom Kristensen will drive the 1973 car, while also on track will be an example of the 935 Moby Dick, the Le Mans derivation of the 935, named after the whale due to its vast rear bodywork.

The car, which is from the Porsche Museum, was clocked at 230mph on the Mulsanne Straight and is one of five genuine 935s due on track.

SHAW WINS ON DEBUT IN SCARAB GRAND PRIX CAR

Mark Shaw took a debut win in the front-engined Scarab Offenhauser Grand Prix car previously owned and raced by Julian Bronson.

Though Shaw had only done a handful of laps in the rain in testing with the 1960 Formula 1 car, the rapid Scot drove from the pitlane to win Friday's opening front-engined HGPCA race at Donington Park.

Former Formula 3000 racer Shaw has added the American car to his rear-engined Lotus 21 and will race both when HGPCA grids are split into front- and rear-engined races. Notably, he plans to take it to Monaco where Bronson has proven the Scarab a winner and Shaw has shown excellent pace in the Lotus.

The front-engined Scarab project, conceived and funded by American Lance Reventlow, arrived in F1 as Lotus and Cooper led the change to rear-engined designs and was too late to show its potential.

Shaw charged from the back to the front at Donington

Tordoff: back to Porsche roots

TORDOFF RETUNS TO PORSCHE RACING ROOTS

Former British Touring Car Championship racer Sam Tordoff has gone full circle to return to racing a 997-model Porsche 911 GT3 Cup.

For the newly created Masters GT Trophy, open to GT4 and Cup cars from 2007 to 2018, Tordoff has acquired a former Carrera Cup car from Norway and entrusted it to the Jordan Racing Team.

"It's a 10-year anniversary," said Tordoff who raced with success in the Carrera Cup GB around a decade ago before graduating into the British Touring Car Championship.

The Porsche now runs with the Jordan team alongside the Lotus Elan that Tordoff shares with his father John and his pre '66 Ford Falcon.

JONES SET FOR RECOVERY AND A RALLYING RETURN

Craig Jones, the driver injured on Rally North Wales, is now home and on the road to recovery.

Former BRC contender Jones, who only switched to historic rallying at the start of this year, and co-driver Ian Taylor went off near the end of the second Gartheiniog stage and a heavy impact in the ditch left Jones with two broken bones in his back. The stage was stopped while he received medical treatment.

Brecon-based Jones said: "Once I've mended and we've mended the car, our next event will be the Roger Albert Clark Rally."

Jones is planning to tackle the five-day marathon for the first time in the Pinto-engined Escort Mk1 previously rallied by Mike Simpson.

Jones is looking ahead to Roger Albert challenge

IN BRIEF

Senna remembered
This year's Donington Historic Festival (April 29-30) will honour the 30th anniversary of the European Grand Prix and Ayrton Senna's extraordinary opening lap in the rain. A lunchtime drack demonstration of F1 cars will he held each day and will include the Toleman TG184 that Senna raced in the 1984 Detroit Grand Prix.

FF racers step up
Historic FF1600 graduates Cam Jackson, Michael O'Brien, Ben Mitchell, Max Bartell, Ross Drybrough and Samuel Harrison will all contest the Gurney Cup at Goodwood on Saturday. Jackson and O'Brien will share a Lotus 23C, Bartell and Drybrough will race Bartell's Elva Mk7S, Mitchell will partner his dad Westie in their Chevron B8 and Harrison will share the Brabham BT5 of Geoff Underwood.

Brace yourself
Jonathan Brace and Paul Spooner have teamed up once more to campaign Brace's Ford Escort Mk1 on Welsh forest rallies. They plan to do all seven rounds of the Welsh Rally Championship and opened their account with a class win on Rally North Wales. They are competing in the historic class in the car built and run by Forest of Dean-based Dave Jenkins Motorsport.

Welsh challenge
A stellar historic entry for Saturday's Rallynuts Stages includes current BTRDA points-leader Ben Friend. The Suffolk driver faces a massive challenge from the similar Ford Escort Mk2s of Rally North Wales winner Joe Price, Jason Pritchard, Martin McCormack and Robert Gough. Meanwhile, Northern Irishman Keith McIvor will pay a rare visit to mid-Wales as part of his build up to November's Roger Albert Clark Rally.

Spice remembered
After nearly a decade as the Gerry Marshall Trophy, this weekend's races for Group 1 Touring Cars at Goodwood will honour period Ford Capri racer Gordon Spice. A fabulous 60-car entry is divided at 2500cc, with two 20-minute heats on Saturday afternoon and a 20-minute final will close Sunday's racing. Topping a dozen Capris is the Ric Wood car in the hands of current British Touring Car ace Jake Hill.

Holme Corvette
Relative racing newcomer Matt Holme has stepped up to a seven-litre Chevrolet Corvette and had his first proper race in the Masters Gentlemen Drivers' enduro at Donington Park on Friday. The 1965 car has a continuous race history in the USA but was more recently brought to the UK and Holme will now race it in Europe with Masters.

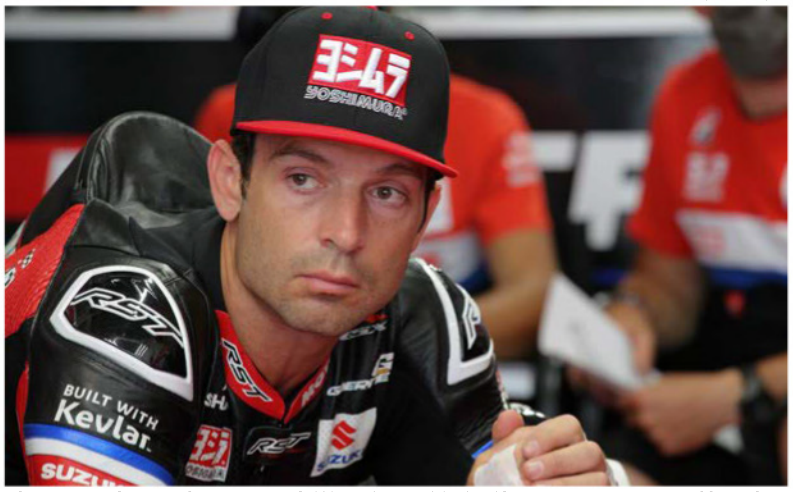
GT Classic
The organisers of the new GT Classic, which is a Motorsport UK permit race tour, have announced that the event will start from Brooklands and Mercedes-Benz World on Tuesday, October 3. Competing cars will take part in a sprint on the test track followed by an autosolo nearby in the afternoon, before heading to Thruxton. The event will then move north via Mallory Park and Harewood hillclimb before finishing at the Gleneagles Hotel five days later. The entry will be limited to 35 cars.

WHY TWO WHEELS ARE NOT ENOUGH FOR LE MANS FANATIC GUINTOLI

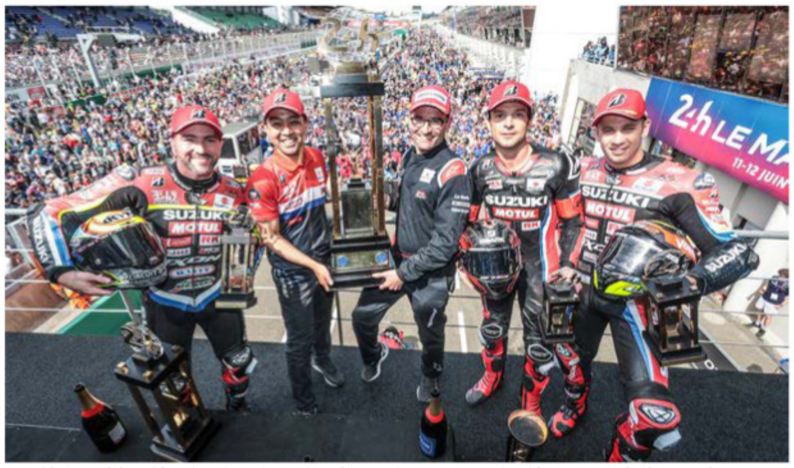
French Suzuki-powered EWC star using British club racing to train for La Sarthe mission. By **Graham Lister**

Photos: Motorsport Images

Guintoli wants to add car success to bike wins



The Frenchman has an ambition to get into the Le Mans record books



Nothing like that winning feeling: top crew in the 2022 bike 24 hours

Sylvain Guintoli will start the two-wheel version of the Le Mans 24 Hours on Saturday afternoon aiming for his third win in as many attempts.

While the significance of that potential achievement might not appear to have too much relevance to the Motorsport News pages, it's important to make the point that the Frenchman also has ambitions to try the four-wheel race at La Sarthe. And he's turned to British club racing to try to make the grade.

Born in France but based in the East Midlands with his English wife and five children, Guintoli's bike racing CV is impressive. He's a World Superbike champion, an ex-MotoGP racer, a winner in British Superbikes and was also part of the Suzuki-powered Yoshimura SERT Motul team that won the 2021 Endurance World Championship, which traditionally gets underway at Le Mans.

> **"Le Mans will be a long-term aim for me"**
>
> *Sylvain Guintoli*

When he's not competing Guintoli keeps busy as a pundit on BT Sport's MotoGP coverage, while his YouTube videos are packed with useful tips on how to ride better and faster.

He's also been busy getting familiar with Radicals, Mazda MX-5s and TCR cars as he goes in search of signatures to upgrade to an International C licence, a pre-requisite towards his grand plan of racing on four wheels at Le Mans.

"I love racing cars and I've done it in the past whenever I had a bit of time or an opportunity, but I never took it seriously," says the former Suzuki factory MotoGP rider. "I was kind of joking with some mates, but nobody has ever won the Le Mans 24-hour motorbike race and the car race. I know it's a huge challenge and I completely understand the difficulty of it but if you want to do something big you've got to dream big don't you? Since then, I can't stop thinking about it so I'm going to try to build this project up."

Racing in the dark has an appeal

The 40-year-old is under no illusions that replicating his achievements on bikes in cars will be far from straightforward.

"It won't be easy because there are loads of things I've got to learn, I've got to practice," Guintoli concedes. "I've got to get better at everything and understand how this all works. But I want to do the 24-hour Le Mans car race at some point and I want to be competitive.

"You've got to pick your category and you've got to pick your fight so I've started to do some [club] racing because in cars you've got to do a certain amount of races to get the licence you need to drive GTs and the more powerful cars. Things are building and I'm going to try to get better and make it happen. It's not a short-term project so we will see how it goes. But it's a good story."

Guintoli is certainly making progress in car racing. He was part of the TCR class-winning team that finished fifth overall in the Birkett Six-Hour Relay at Silverstone last October in a Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR run by Capture Motorsport and backed by his EWC sponsor Motul.

"I did some races in Radicals years back, they are not hugely fast but they've got a bit of aero and slick tyres," Guintoli remembers. "They're not easy to drive fast but that's a good thing [for learning]. The TCR thing was really good, different because it was front-wheel drive but really good fun. I also did a Mazda race a couple of weeks ago. That was a bit more like go-karting, bumping into each other but I want to learn the proper way, the basics."

As a former test rider for Suzuki's now defunct factory MotoGP squad, Guintoli is well versed in the use of data, which he also believes will aid his transition.

"The way we work with data, and what your input is on the machine and what it does on track is very similar to car racing," Guintoli explains. "You are trying to understand the correct way to brake in a certain car and the correct technique to accelerate and to steer. All this data we use a lot in bikes, so it helps to understand the dynamics of the vehicles. But experience is the main thing. And although there are a lot of similarities [between bike and car racing] there are differences, there's no pitching in a car or very little, for example."

Despite having a roof over his head Guintoli says he's not adopted a more gung-ho approach in car racing, which will put him in good stead for when he does make it to the Le Mans 24 Hours.

"Having done bikes for so long I don't feel unsafe," he says. "If I'm riding a bike on track or driving a car I don't feel safer in a car, it's a different exercise. You've got to get the best out of it in a different way. I'm never on a bike and thinking I could hurt myself, I'm thinking how can I go faster.

"Le Mans is a mid-term thing for me. It won't be straight away because I want to do it when I'm ready, I want to be competitive. My feeling is you can learn to be decent and I don't think it will take too much time but it's the extra you want to achieve that will take longer." ■

GUINTOLI'S CAR RACING AMBITIONS RUBBING OFF ON FELLOW BIKER BLACK

Sylvain Guintoli is not the only member of the Yoshimura SERT Motul Endurance World Championship squad with ambitions to switch codes one day.

His team-mate Gregg Black, who was born in Derby but moved to France when he was three, has it down as a long-term aim.

"I like any racing and car racing is something I could be doing in the next few years," says the 34-year-old. "It's true I'm concentrating on two wheels but Sylvain is getting to the second stage of his career which I'm going to be in a few years as well so why not?"

For now, two wheels and the EWC season-opening 24 Heures Motos is very much the focus for Guintoli, Black and their team-mate Etienne Masson.

"It's a brilliant event and it's one of the reasons why I want to do the car race because I just love the spirit of Le Mans," says Guintoli. "It's special and fascinating. But it's so hard, it's so difficult, it drains you, it destroys you and pushes you to the limit physically and mentally. I absolutely love but I also absolutely hate it."

The 24 Heures Motos is live on British Eurosport and Eurosport Player this weekend.

BRITISH GT REPORT: OULTON PARK

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

Adam held off Gunn in thrilling crescendo

Moore celebrated a fine strategic call

ADAM DEFLECTS GUNN SHOT IN OPENER

The 2 Seas Mercedes beats Aston in dramatic race while strategy wins day for Mustang, by Graham Keilloh

Jonny Adam celebrated his 100th British GT start with thrilling victory alongside James Cottingham in their 2 Seas Motorsport 4 Mercedes-AMG GT3 in Oulton Park's opener holding off Ross Gunn's Beechdean Motorsport Aston Martin Vantage in worsening conditions.

The 2 Seas Mercedes was in a net lead throughout, with Cottingham taking charge from pole. But the fight for victory went down to the final corner as fresh rain arrived late on.

Gunn – who had passed Marcus Clutton's Enduro McLaren for second earlier that lap – charged in on Adam and got alongside on the outside of the final turn, but in the slick surface both slid wide.

Adam though had enough momentum to hang on in first ahead of his former team. It also was Am driver Cottingham's first British GT win.

Adam told Motorsport News of the dramatic crescendo: "I saw Ross got to the outside and I braked quite late and it looked like both of us slid, literally, nearly off the road.

"It was a heart-in-your-mouth situation, I didn't know where he was on the exit of the corner.

"It was nice to put a show on for everyone but more importantly nice to start with good points as well."

Cottingham added of his freshman win: "It feels like a long time coming. Last year we were just so close so many times.

"All weekend I've been convinced that I've got to string it together. And that's what I did at the start, the damp conditions leant into my historic experience immensely."

In the drying opening stint Cottingham indeed moved clear, despite the Mercedes cars having their wings clipped somewhat via Balance of Performance changes after a strong qualifying.

Twice-champion Andrew Howard meanwhile, sharing the Beechdean Aston with Gunn, got the car into contention during the race's opening stint including with an astonishing double pass at Old Hall of Mercedes pair, Sky Tempesta's Kevin Tse and Team Abba's Richard Neary.

Having handed over to their Pro partners Gunn, now second after the stops, closed quickly on Adam, and to add spice rain – periodic and increasing heavy – returned.

It looked like Adam had got vital respite when Clutton took advantage of the squabble to nip past Gunn into second. But Gunn got back past for one final attack.

Clutton held off a late Jules Gounon charge in the other 2 Seas Mercedes, by just 0.029 seconds.

Will Moore and Matt Nicoll-Jones in their Academy Motorsport Ford Mustang meanwhile were surprise winners of the GT4 race. And they won it by a country mile, after starting on slicks and running a long first stint with Moore behind the wheel, and then being able to pit under a safety car. This not only vaulted the car to first place, it got it a lap ahead of its opponents.

Its stablemate Mustang duo Erik Evans and Matt Cowley – which similarly ran a contra-strategy but pitted before the safety car – was second home, ahead of Michael Crees and Thomas Holland's Raceway Motorsport Ginetta G56. The Academy cars indeed ran 1-2 overall for a time as their masterplan played out.

Moore told MN: "Someone asked me: what would you want to do [on strategy] if we were send you to the grid now? I said 'sticks slicks on and send it'. So I'll take the credit for that!

"With the BoP on dry tyres on a dry track, we have not got the fastest car out there, that's a fact. The reason I won it was a good strategy and a very lucky safety car."

For Moore too this result marked his full-time British GT comeback after sitting out most of last year undergoing a PCL reconstruction.

"It's nice to know I can still do it," Moore added. "I'm riddled with injuries, a lot of metal work, a lot of stuff in my body, and I was going to retire.

"But to come back on the first outing, with the boy band back together, me and Matt, to get a win is really great."

RESULTS

British GT Championship 2023

Round 1: Oulton Park, GT3

POS.	DRIVER 1/DRIVER 2	TEAM/CAR	CATEGORY	TIME
1	James Cottingham/Jonny Adam	2 Seas Motorsport/Mercedes-AMG	Pro-Am	1h01m36.116s
2	Andrew Howard/Ross Gunn	Beechdean Motorsport/Aston Martin Vantage AMR	Pro-Am	+0.455s
3	Morgan Tillbrook/Marcus Clutton	Enduro Motorsport/McLaren 720S Evo	Pro-Am	+1.364s
4	Ian Loggie/Jules Gounon	2 Seas Motorsport/Mercedes-AMG	Pro-Am	+1.393s
5	John Ferguson/Raffaele Marciello	RAM Racing/Mercedes-AMG	Pro-Am	+8.684s
6	Darren Leung/Dan Harper	Century Motorsport/BMW M4	Pro-Am	+11.134s
7	Mark Radcliffe/Rob Bell	Optimum Motorsport/McLaren 720S Evo	Pro-Am	+28.871s
8	Lucky Khera/Euan Hankey	Race Lab/McLaren 720S Evo	Pro-Am	+30.083s
9	Mark Smith/Martin Plowman	Paddock Motorsport/McLaren 720S	Pro-Am	+36.155s
10	Iain Campbell/James Kell	Race Lab/McLaren 720S Evo	Silver-Am	+38.362s

11 Alex West/Marvin Kirchhofer (Garage 59/McLaren 720S Evo) +42.404s; 12 Shaun Balfe/Sandy Mitchell (Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan Evo) +45.563s; 13 Kevin Tse/Chris Froggatt (Sky Tempesta Racing/McLaren 720S Evo) +2m14.766s; 14 Mark Sansom/Will Tregurtha (Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan Evo) -1 lap; 15 Andrey Borodin/Oliver Webb (Greystone GT/McLaren 720S Evo) -1 lap; 16 Mike Price/Callum Macleod (Greystone GT/Mercedes-AMG) -2 laps; 17 Simon Orange/Michael O'Brien (Orange Racing by JMH/McLaren 720S Evo) -9 laps; R Richard Neary/Sam Neary (Team Abba Racing/Mercedes-AMG) 15 laps. **Pole position:** Cottingham 1m34.000s. **Fastest lap:** Harper 1m34.501s (102.55mph). **Winner's average speed:** 81.28mph.

Round 1: Oulton Park, GT4

POS.	DRIVER 1/DRIVER 2	TEAM/CAR	CATEGORY	TIME
1	Will Moore/Matt Nicoll-Jones	Academy Motorsport/Ford Mustang	Silver	1h02m23.858s
2	Matt Cowley/Erik Evans	Academy Motorsport/Ford Mustang	Silver	-1 lap
3	Michael Crees/Thomas Holland	Raceway Motorsport/Ginetta G56	Pro-Am	-1 lap
4	Carl Cavers/Lewis Plato	Century Motorsport/BMW M4	Pro-Am	-1 lap
5	Michael Johnston/Chris Salkeld	Century Motorsport/BMW M4	Pro-Am	-1 lap
6	Jack Brown/Charles Clark	Optimum Motorsport/McLaren Artura	Silver	-1 lap
7	Kavi Jundu/Tom Rawlings	Paddock Motorsport/McLaren Artura	Pro-Am	-1 lap
8	Zac Meakin/Dan Vaughan	Team Parker Racing/Porsche 718 Cayman	Silver	-1 lap
9	Aston Millar/Josh Rowledge	DTO Motorsport/McLaren Artura GT4	Silver	-1 lap
10	Ed McDermott/Michael Broadhurst	One Motorsport/Mercedes-AMG	Pro-Am	-1 lap

11 Sam Maher-Loughnan/James Wallis (Drivetac/Mercedes-AMG) -2 laps; 12 Aaron Morgan/Bobby Trundley (Team Brit/McLaren 570S) -2 laps; 13 Freddie Tomlinson/Stuart Middleton (Raceway Motorsport/Ginetta G56) -2 laps; 14 Ian Duggan/James Townsend (Toro Verde GT/Ginetta G56 GT4) -2 laps; 15 Joe Wheeler/Esmee Hawkey (Toro Verde GT/Ginetta G56) -3 laps; 16 Ian Gough/Tom Wrigley Race Lab/McLaren Artura -7 laps; R Harry Nunn/Harry George (Enduro Motorsport/McLaren Artura 17 laps; R Josh Miller/Seb Hopkins (R Racing/Aston Martin Vantage AMR) 2 laps. **Pole position:** Brown 1m40.650s. **Fastest lap:** Clark 1m43.732s (93.42mph). **Winner's average speed:** 77.65mph.

GB3 REPORT BY GRAHAM KEILLOH

LOAKE AND HEDLEY CHARGE TO THEIR FIRST GB3 RACE VICTORIES

British Formula 4 graduates Joseph Loake and James Hedley split the first two wins of the GB3 season with fine showings in a dramatic Oulton Park opener to take their first victories in the category.

Debutant Loake started his GB3 career in the best way with an imperious race-one win, leading a JHR Developments 1-2 from pole ahead of stablemate Matthew Rees.

Only Rodin Carlin's Callum Voisin clung to the JHR pair's coattails as the top three broke clear from a squabbling main pack.

Loake told Motorsport News: "I dreamed of [this debut]; I definitely didn't imagine it. It's something that I couldn't have asked for. Last year [in British F4], first half of the year was awful, and I picked up my first pole position in a single-seater literally in the last round of F4, and we managed to go through the winter with a very high mindset."

However while the top three's progress was serene there was late disruption. First the safety car was deployed when Hitech's fourth-placed Souta Arao spun exiting Brittens. Then when green-flag racing resumed with two minutes left McKenzy Cresswell, Gerrard Xie and Costa Toparis crashed out at Lodge before the startline.

This in turn preceded a frightening situation where the pack tore towards the three stricken cars being attended to by marshals, covered only by double-waved yellows. Then Toparis's empty unattended car rolled backwards agonisingly towards the passing cars. The red flag soon ended matters.

Eight-time British F4 race-winner Hedley is only signed for this opening GB3 meeting, but he followed his fine pre-season form with Arden VRD with a fourth position in the dry opener then an impressive wet race-two win.

Heavy rain arrived during the warm-up laps, and – after the start was delayed to let all change to wets – Hedley from fourth on the grid immediately vaulted to second behind poleman Loake

Then, having aggressively hounded Loake, Hedley got on lap two by with an excellent outside-to-in pass at Lodge.

Voisin also soon got by Loake and chased Hedley down late on, but they finished in that order with Loake third.

Hedley told MN: "I've always loved the wet. The win was more realistic in the wet. The car's been mint. I'm a bit lost for words.

"I'm fighting for my career. We're in it to win it. These results are the best way to get some more funding for the season."

RACE WINNERS

Race 1: Joseph Loake (JHR Developments);
Race 2: James Hedley (Arden VRD)

SUPPORTS

SLATER KICKS OFF JUNIOR BID WITH A DOUBLE

Freddie Slater (R Racing) started his Ginetta Junior season in style with two wins, his Saturday success coming after a tussle with Charlie Hart (Elite). Once Hart lost the tow, Slater pulled away to win a red-flagged race. Slater did the double by winning Monday's opener, chased by Hugo Schwarze (Elite).

An outstanding GB4 season-opener fell to Jeremy Fairbairn who drove a superb defensive race to fend off the attack of KMR team-mate Tom Mills. As the two battled and delayed each other, the following pack headed by Cooper Webster (Evans GP) closed, chased in turn by Colin Queen (Fortec). Mills won a wet and interrupted second stanza on Monday from Liam McNeilly (Fox).

Nick White (Raceway) won the first GT Academy race after Ravi Ramyead (Century) spun on lap one. Ramyead benefitted from a safety car to jump White in race two.

Luke Reade (Wolf) was a runaway winner of the opening Ginetta GT Championship on Saturday and even a jump start penalty couldn't stop him on Monday.

David Addison

Slater wrapped up Juniors

RACE WINNERS

Ginetta Junior championship
Races 1 & 2: Freddie Slater (R Racing)

Ginetta GT Academy
Race 1: Nick White (Raceway Motorsport);
Race 2: Ravi Ramyead (Century Motorsport)

Ginetta GT championship
Races 1 & 2: Luke Reade (Wolf Motorsport);

GB4 championship
Race 1: Jeremy Fairbairn (KMR Sport) ;
Race 2: Tom Mills (KMR Sport)

JACKIE OLIVER: I DROVE THE CARS, MADE A TEAM, AND MANAGED THE STAGE

The racer on both sides of the Atlantic, long-time F1 team boss and BRDC director looks back on his time in motorsport with **Graham Keilloh**

Oliver has been there, done that

Some CVs have to be seen to be believed. And with Jackie Oliver's resume, it's not entirely clear how he's fitted it all in to a single career.

Early on he was a race-winning British Saloon Car Championship driver, and he climbed all the way to Formula 1. His stint there nearly brought race victory on more than one occasion, as well as started with the self-described "baptism of fire" of replacing none other than the recently lost Jim Clark at Lotus.

Oliver also was a prolific sportscar racer and won the 'triple crown' of the Le Mans 24 Hours, Daytona 24 Hours and the Sebring 12 Hours, as well as took a Can-Am title. He even dabbled in some NASCAR racing.

Then in the late 1970s Oliver began his quarter-century stint as co-founder and boss of the Arrows F1 team, and once again race victory was missed only narrowly and more than once.

After that Oliver's motorsport career moved into its third act, by spending almost a decade as British Racing Drivers' Club director, including serving as its chairman. He was instrumental in saving the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, as well as in shaping the venue into the form we know today. Oliver also in the more recent part of his motorsport time has been a regular behind the wheel in classic car racing.

It's fair to say therefore that what Oliver hasn't done in motorsport probably isn't worth doing. We're grateful that he spared the time to answer readers' questions and – with him having hit his 80th birthday last year – he remains passionate and articulate about all matters of motorsport and of his own experience and contribution in it. You'll discover this from reading on.

Question: How did you feel about taking over from Jim Clark at Lotus? Did you think you were on a hiding to nothing?
Steven Nye
Via email

Jackie Oliver: "Colin Chapman [Lotus boss] signed me up on a three-year contract – Formula 3, Formula 2, Formula 1 – in 1966, '67 and '68, so it was a very nice progression. But it was quite unusual then, I don't think there were any Formula 1 teams that had young third drivers, and I was a young driver doing a lot of development and testing work, driving anything, seeing what would break which is the way Colin did his structural design elements.

"So I got to drive lots of cars for Colin both in testing and drove with Graham [Hill] in Formula 2 in '67, and then Jimmy got killed in our Formula 2 car programme at Hockenheim and the season had already started in '68. So Jim Endruweit was a great fan of mine but he was just a team manager, and Jim Endruweit said to Colin 'why don't we put Jackie in the car?'

"And Colin didn't really want to do that, and I think the reason why he didn't want to do it [was] not only had he lost his best driver, he'd lost his best friend, and I was neither of those two things for Colin. But Colin didn't have any other opportunities because the season has already started, so he reluctantly agreed I should take over. But it was in at the deep end because not only was it the start of the season although I did a lot of the testing with the Formula 1 car, I'd never done a full Formula 1 season and I was replacing someone who was probably the best driver in the world with the best car.

"Subsequently when I went to the first race at Monte Carlo I said to Jim Endruweit 'what's this press release? I'm Jack Oliver, the press release says Jackie Oliver?' He said 'well Colin's decided he wants to call you Jackie', and I said 'why's he done that?', he said 'I think he was trying to buy Jackie Stewart out of Tyrrell but one is that Ken [Tyrrell] wouldn't let him and two Jackie didn't want to do that because he didn't think the cars were safe'.

"That was really Colin, he didn't really want me and I was given the best opportunity in life for a Formula 1 driver in a team that had Graham and had me so any mistake that I was going to make would just prove the point. So the first mistake I made was coming out of the tunnel in seventh place with [Ludovico] Scarfiotti and Bruce McLaren tangling. So I had a choice, I could either drive off the edge into the hay or try and get between the wreckage of the cars and the rockface just before the chicane. I chose the latter, but it took two wheels off the side of the car.

"So when I went back to the pits, I went back in a rowing boat on the harbour and got off at the quayside, walked up to Colin who was there on the lap chart on the pitwall and he said 'you're fired' [laughs]. So it wasn't a good start, and from then on I had a mixed bag of success. I finished fifth at the next race which was the Belgian Grand Prix then I had an accident in practice at Rouen and then led

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey

Shell
Shell
CHAMPION
FERODO
LUCAS
NLOP

Oliver (9) leads away in 1968's British Grand Prix

the British Grand Prix at Brands Hatch.

"[After] leading the British GP I got a lot of interest from a lot of Formula 1 teams, BRM in particular. It was Tim Parnell [BRM team manager] who came to me after the British Grand Prix and says 'Louis Stanley [BRM boss] wants to see you at the hotel in London next Wednesday'. So I went to see him, I signed up with BRM when I was halfway through my contract with Lotus.

"The trouble is with things in life like that would Colin have taken Jochen Rindt or would he have chosen me by the end of the season? I suspect that Jochen would have got the job and not me, for all the reasons I've stated.

"So that is the world of a young driver embarking on Formula 1 for the first time, it's a baptism of fire."

Question: Which is the 'race that got away'? Is there one defeat that is more painful than the others?
Jack Crowther
Via email

> **"When I got back to the pits Chapman said 'you're fired"**
>
> **Jackie Oliver**

JO: "I've got a picture on the wall here of me leading off from second place on the grid [in the 1968 British Grand Prix]. Graham was on pole, I was in second place and the New Zealander [Chris Amon] was in the Ferrari. And I led that race for the first 12 laps. I had to let Graham past on the hairpin after 12 or 15 laps but his car broke and I led until the engine went. So to have had my first Formula 1 win at my home grand prix is something that I miss.

"And also I should have won the [1973] Canadian Grand Prix because of a terrible confusion with regard to the safety car during that wet race, and whether or not Emerson [Fittipaldi] was on the correct lap, which he may have been, I should have finished second there and not third. And they gave [Peter] Revson the victory and I think he was one lap behind, I think there was a screw up.

"Was I capable of winning a World championship? Probably not. But I was certainly capable enough to win a handful of Formula 1 races. Lotus, BRM, McLaren and Shadow were the teams I drove for in Formula 1 and because of one thing and another [wins] were elusive.

"The BRM was capable of winning some races in 1970 but they were terribly unreliable, everything was going wrong. The team was quite capable and Tony Southgate coming to design the car in the second year was a breath of fresh air, but the team was run by someone that really didn't understand the mechanics of running a Formula 1 team. Louis Stanley was very good at some things and he certainly raised a lot of money getting tobacco companies into Formula 1 but he was not experienced enough in

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USF&G ASSET MANAGEMENT
Footwork ARROWS
Marlboro

Oliver's quarter-century run as Arrows boss brought him into contact with some prestigious people...

Another near miss: Oliver got third in Canadian "screw up"

which to understand the best people in which to manage the technical output of BRM.

"And after me telling him that in the end of '71, he didn't renew my contract for '72. So not only did he not know what the best was thing to do with the team, he wasn't the type of individual that could take criticism very well."

Question: How did the Americans treat you when you tried NASCAR in 1972? Were they welcoming, or suspicious?
John Charles
Via email

JO: "I was known as a Little Limey, which I think was a nice title. It was the best series, it was very agricultural. I was not well equipped because in road racing with its various speeds and changing corners and gear changing and everything else there's 12 disciplines that you have to be quite good at, in NASCAR there are five of which I had no previous experience.

"You don't slide the car in NASCAR, there's no opposite lock on the banking and there's no controlling the car at slow-speed corners so it's just a flat-out blind with drafting and it took me a long time to learn those skills especially looking after the tyres is a major factor in NASCAR.

> "I was welcomed in NASCAR and it was the best series"
> Jackie Oliver

Two V6s stuck together? Porsche's engine was a huge failure

"So to answer the question it was great because everybody made money, you could be at the back of the grid or the front of the grid. They were very welcoming, there was country and western music, everybody was in the same [place] and at the hotels and the barbecues afterwards it was a very homogeneous experience.

"And I was welcomed, OK if I'd been really good at it and I had the best car and I was winning all the races they probably wouldn't have been so welcoming, but because I was mid grid, my best result was third at Dover, in Delaware, so I was not threatening to the top runners. But even if I had have been I suspect that they would have been quite welcoming. [Junior] Johnson [NASCAR team owner] was great, always willing to talk to me and help me, gave me some advice. And I made a fair amount of money at it too because I got paid at every race.

"The reasons why I did it, it was a French journalist Jabby Crombac who was approached by the head of NASCAR, [who] said we're not allowed to call our events international unless we have a graded driver. And Jabby said 'well Jackie's in Can-Am and living in the States and he's got a superlicence', so I went to see him and he offered me a salary for each race which was right up there, $2000 a race, which in '71 was quite a lot of money, plus a percentage of the prize money and Holman and Moody supplied the car. So I did NASCAR because of that, only for one season, but I very much enjoyed it. It was refreshing from the competitiveness of the different nature in Formula 1."

MN: Was there any reason why you didn't stay there?

JO: "I was a road racer and I wanted to get back into Formula 1, which I did through the Shadow programme."

Question: Which did you prefer: race driving or team management?
Barrie Donaldson
Via email

JO: "Well the answer to that question is both. And the reasons why, I've got lots of old friends that stayed too long driving the car, and there's nothing wrong with that but the difficulty is that if you stay too long doing it you slide down through the ranks, you start to have to ask someone 'can I drive your car?' or arrange it in such a way where you can drive the car.

"And when I got into the late '70s my career was such that the phone had stopped ringing, which meant that I had to start to enquire whether I could drive or not. I'll give you an example, I had a fantastic period with Graham Hill as a team-mate at Lotus. When his career started to decline and I brought Shadow over from the United States and built the cars in Northampton, I said to [Shadow boss] Don Nichols 'don't sell a car to Graham Hill, it's not the thing to do, we've just started to build a Formula 1 car in the UK to contest the '73 season, don't overload it that way and it's not appropriate for Graham to do that'. But we sold him a chassis anyway.

"And the reasons why Graham did it, he wanted to start his own team and drive the car, which I never did with Arrows, and I think there's a conflict of interest between someone owning a team and driving for it, especially a two-car team. And I thought it was inappropriate for Shadow for the reasons of overcapacity at the time, that we'd just started out the Formula 1 team in the UK, and an inappropriate thing for Graham to do is driving the car as well.

"So I looked at that and when I came to run my own team I vowed that I would never drive my own car. There were two moments that made me that decision. My father took me to Brands Hatch to watch the Formula 1 practice when I wasn't old enough to have a driving licence, and I watched Jack Brabham get into the Brabham to go out to practice and he had a spanner in his hand after adjusting the car and then he threw the spanner out of the car and drove underneath the tunnel to go to the circuit. And I said to my dad 'I thought he was driving the car, I didn't know he was a mechanic as well?'

"And in those days in the '60s it was appropriate, and I saw John Surtees start his own Formula 1 team and he continued to drive with Alan Jones in the second car and it was even more inappropriate in the late '70s because he had a driver that complained about the car and John says there's nothing wrong with it, but he was a second-and-a-half a lap slower than him.

"So those two things in my experience made me of the view that I would never drive my own car if I start a Formula 1 team. So that's how I'd come to start my own Formula 1 team, because the phone had stopped ringing, it was the time to stop and I didn't want to leave the sport so I started my own team, and never drove the cars."

Question: Please can you ask how difficult it was for independent teams such as Arrows to compete in the turbo era.
Adrian King
Via Twitter

JO: "It's a very good question. BRM are pretty active at the moment with one of the nephews that wants to revive the name and that was the reason I was at [Race] Retro because they're asking me to do a lot of things because there's not many of us left, so Paul [Owen, director of BRM] has been very active in that and the question came up of why aren't BRM here anymore.

"And that's an interesting question because if you look at the number of Formula 1 teams, especially when the Cosworth engine came onboard, [the number] exploded, we had to pre-qualify in many cases. And I said [to a journalist

Le Mans 1969 win was one of several sportscar successes

once] well if you look at the number of teams that have gone bust it's about 10 times more than the number of teams that contested, so the fact of the matter, both from a driver's point of view in the car and from an owner of a Formula 1 team it's a very precarious risky operation.

"And if you look at the teams that are not here anymore, Lotus is one of the most successful teams next to Ferrari and Lotus are not here anymore, now how the hell did that happen? And the trouble is with running a Formula 1 team they only survive if they're successful, so if you're not successful the money dries up and so does the business.

"Someone said to me once 'you've had four careers', and I said 'well I've only had two, I don't know why you think I've had four careers'. He said 'well you drove the car then you had a Formula 1 team and then you were director at Silverstone, and classic car racing'. And I said 'well the classic car racing was a hobby and the activity at Silverstone for nine years was pro bono, so I really only had two, and one I risked my life in the '60s and '70s, and risked my financial security with the Formula 1 team with my own business'.

"So really, if that answers the question, then as a private team there's no guarantee. The only one that's made any longevity to the current day is of course Ferrari, and as Bernie Ecclestone said to me when we complained about Ferrari dominating Formula 1, he said 'well Ferrari think they're 50% of Formula 1', and he's probably right."

MN: So what was it like at Arrows in the '80s when you had the BMW turbo and how did the engine compare to the frontrunning engines?

JO: "Well Formula 1's been driven by formulae that are engine dominant or car dominant. Everybody thinks they're dominant because of the driver but the best drivers end up in the best teams and the reasons why the best drivers have got a margin on some other drivers with maybe half a second at certain circuits but you can only do it if the car is not half a second a lap slower than the competitor.

"So that's why the best teams and the best drivers come together, is because that small margin made between one or other team is driven by the speed of the driver marginally. So is current [F1] engine dominant? I would think so. I would say it's dominant because I think it's quite difficult for Aston Martin to beat Mercedes-Benz when it's got a Mercedes engine in the back. If that was imminent I think Mercedes-Benz would say well what are we doing? We're beating ourselves here. So engine dominance can be dangerous."

Question: I'd like to ask Jackie about the involvement of Wataru Ohashi and Footwork in F1. Was it supposed to be a significant investment before the crash of the Asian markets? As far as I know, Footwork was already heavily involved in the Japanese scenario and even sponsored an international F3000 team for two seasons. Were Ohashi's plans and money related to the ill-fated alliance with Porsche?

Guilherme Ribeiro
Via Facebook

JO: "He's already given you the answer, because it was to do with the engine. Porsche were very successful with McLaren, but Mansour Ojjeh of TAG paid for it, so there you had an engine manufacturer that entered Formula 1 with the team owner paying for the engine technology and the association of McLaren and Porsche deserve equally the success of that.

"Because of that successful arrangement, a few years later Porsche

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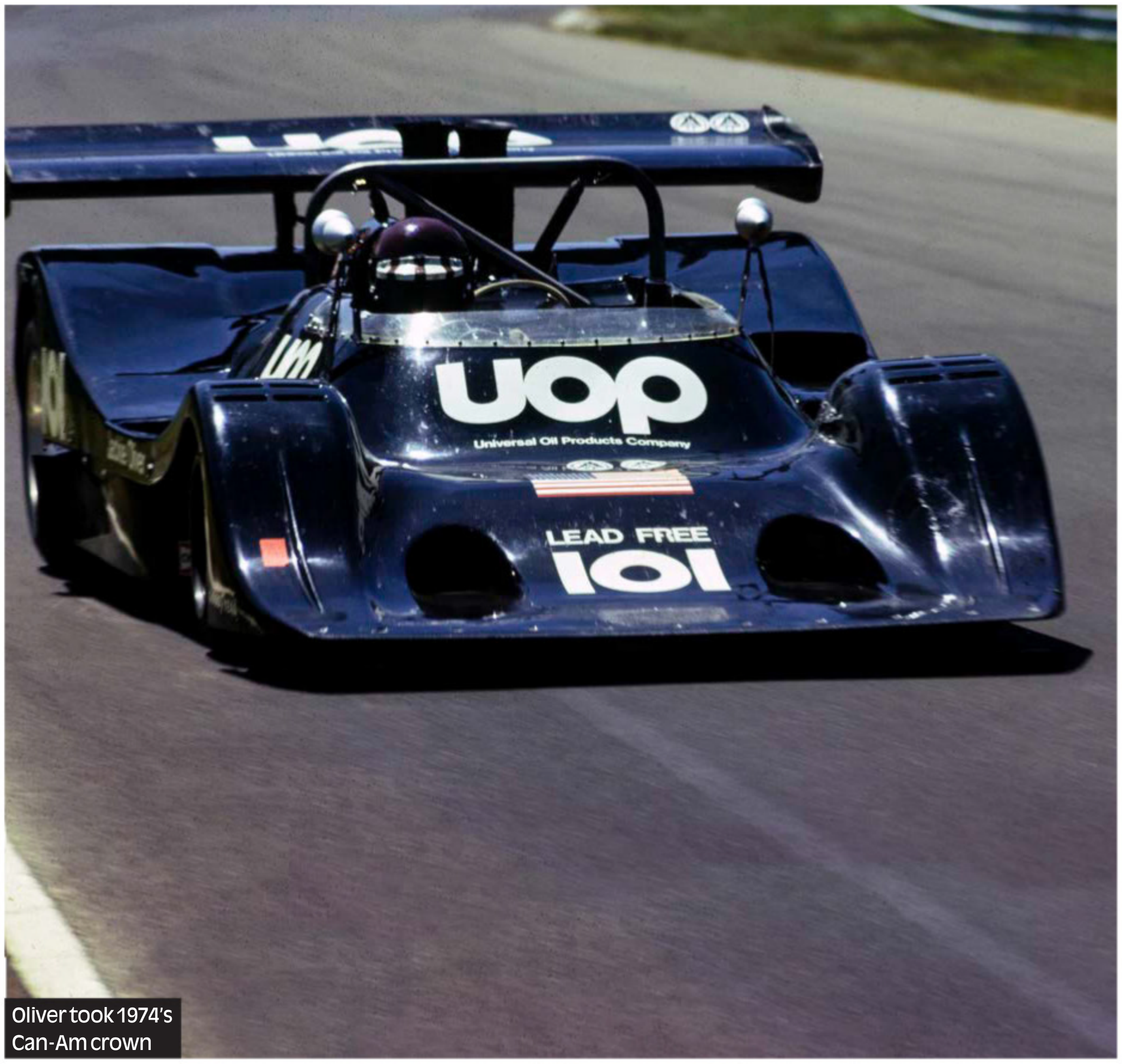


Oliver took 1974's Can-Am crown

Warsteiner
ARROWS
Warsteiner Pilsener
EINE KÖNIGIN UNTER DEN BIEREN

Oliver (r) vowed that he'd never race his own cars

came to the Formula 1 market looking for a team to give an engine to, but they wanted someone to pay for it, it's quite unusual. So they came to see me and I said 'yes, you see, well the only thing is it's going to cost £5 million'. So I sought about finding someone that would support it, and John Wickham who was running the Formula 3 team in Japan for Wataru Ohashi came to me and he said they're interested but they want to own the team. So I sold the racing team to him which provided the funds in which to have the Porsche engine.

"The only difference between the TAG programme and the Footwork-Arrows-Porsche engine was that the TAG was a turbocharged engine of which Porsche had a lot of previous experience, and that the programme was put together over a two- or three-year period. The Arrows-Footwork -Porsche programme was put together in 18 months.

"And the mistake they made, well we both made the mistake, is that Ohashi was very keen to do the deal before we saw the engine, in fact the deal was commensurate upon having a Porsche engine. So we signed the contract before we'd actually seen the engine. I went to Weissach [Porsche base] after the launch in Osaka with Porsche and Arrows, I saw the engine that they were doing and it wasn't running, it was two V6 engines that were the basis of the original TAG programme put together as a central power take off to make a V12 engine.

"And Alan Jenkins was the designer and I went to him, I said 'is that going to work?' He said 'it's Porsche, it will work'. But it was too heavy and of course it was normally aspirated and not turbocharged so now with the wisdom of that [a] normally aspirated cylinder head is not appropriate from a turbocharged cylinder head because the gas flows, so the engine never breathed properly so it was a failure to begin with. And that was a big disappointment to Footwork and eventually did lead to them withdrawing from the sport.

"And as your person asked it was to do with costs because Ohashi had borrowed a lot of money to expand his business internationally and the banks at that time closed on him and said well the first thing you must do is honour all the loans that have been made and get rid of the Formula 1 team. So the Porsche failure brought a contraction of funding with Footwork and they left the sport because of it."

MN: One thing about it is it seems very strange that Porsche managed to produce such a bad concept, so did you ever get any explanation or sense how it managed to do that?

JO: "Well I've often asked myself why was I reasonably successful as a Formula 1 driver, not superbly successful, and why was I reasonably successful in surviving with a F1 team for nearly 25 years? And I think the answer to that is I probably wasn't good enough at both but I was good enough to make a reasonable living from it and be successful in certain cars.

"Arrows should have been at least third in '89"

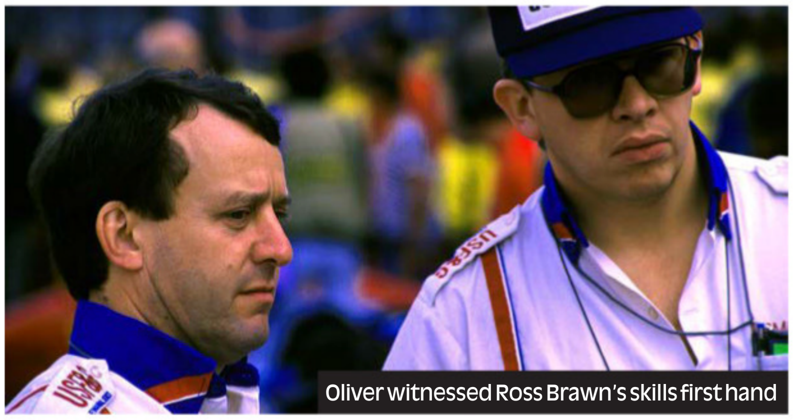
Jackie Oliver

"And I was reasonably successful in running a Formula 1 team because I was rather prudent and entrepreneurial and when I saw the engine for the first time at Porsche I knew it was going to be a failure, so I said to Alan Jenkins 'let's go and see the engine designer and explain to him that the engine configuration is not appropriate anymore, it's too big, too heavy, and based on the turbocharged engine inlets'. And unfortunately Porsche turned around and said we're Porsche, and you're losing confidence in us.

"And I said 'no I'm not losing confidence in you but I think it's wrong', and they refused to listen to it. And I'll tell you a story about that. Ohashi called me when all this was going on and he said 'Jackie I need to talk to you about the failure', and I said well 'I could get to Osaka in two days' time but I can't get there now,' he said 'you don't need to come to Osaka, there is a very nice Chinese restaurant just off Victoria Street, I'll meet you there this evening at 1900hrs'.

"So I thought this sounds like a Japanese hari-kari, I'm going to get my head chopped off. So I went to the restaurant, saw Ohashi, thanked him for coming to see me and we sat down, he handed me the menu and said 'what would you like to eat?' I said 'Wataru, I've got no appetite, what do you want to say to me?'

"He said 'I had a visit from Porsche at Osaka three days ago, and they made a proposal to me, they said the problem with the engine failure is your team and Mr Oliver because he's complaining about lots of things that are not our fault' so, Ohashi says, 'OK so what are you proposing?' They said 'well we've been to see Jordan and he'll take the engine but he wants your sponsorship as well'. So I said to Ohashi 'what are you going to do?' He said 'well what I'd like you to do Jackie is I'd like you to call Herr [Arno] Bohn, head of Porsche, and thank him for his people visiting me a few days ago and tell him we're not interested', which I thought was astounding.



Oliver witnessed Ross Brawn's skills first hand

"So I called up Herr Bohn, got the secretary who spoke English and I said 'can I talk to Herr Bohn?' She said 'what do you want to talk to him about?' I said 'well if you put me through I'll tell him'. She says 'well he's not here at the moment, you can tell me what you want to say to him', so I told her 'would you pass on a message from me, from Mr Ohashi, and thank him for his visit last Wednesday but he's not interested', and she dropped the telephone [laughs].

"It didn't help us very much and we consequently went to Honda customer engine [the Mugen] because I knew Honda's son quite well, lived in California, and met him in California, so we put the Honda engine in the car for a year but the damage had been done."

Question: How good was the 1989 Arrows? Why was Derek Warwick's race-winning pace at Brazil not repeated?

Alexander Cameron
Via email

JO: "We should have certainly finished third if not higher in the championship with that car. Well let me say the most important person in a Formula 1 team is the designer, that's true to today with Adrian Newey and the Red Bull.

"I was trying to get someone out of McLaren to replace my [departed designer], and then my secretary Rosemary said to me 'I've got a Ross Brawn on the phone', I said 'I don't know him but put him through', I'll talk to anybody. So Ross came on the phone and said 'I understand you're looking for a designer', I said 'who told you that?' And he said well he's currently working for McLaren, so I thought 'ah well he's not going to come then is he?'

"So I said to him 'well come and see me', so he did. And he was the designer of the car that we had, that Derek drove with Eddie Cheever. And there's no surprise now, looking back at Ross's career once he went to the right team with the right amount of money, but he had a latent skill in managing a design office effectively.

"And the reasons why we didn't win more races was because it wasn't reliable enough and that was probably down to wrong management in the reliability area of the team. Maybe Ross was pushing the envelope too far for a team that didn't have enough money and enough strength in which to produce a reliable car, it's probably true, but I think that's what happened.

"Derek came back to me with the Honda engine in the Footwork [for 1993], but the relationship he had with Ross Brawn was not mirrored in the relationship he had with Alan Jenkins. Although the car was quite good Derek wasn't very happy, and we had a Japanese driver as well which was part of the punishment for the Porsche failure. Ohashi said to me 'I want a Japanese driver and a Japanese engine'.

"The engine [the Mugen-Honda] was alright but the Japanese driver [Aguri Suzuki], he was OK, he was one of the better ones and he was very nice in the team. I enjoyed my time with the Japanese, I've got a lot of respect for them. They are good people, they work very hard and they're quite kind and thoughtful.

"But no, the Ross Brawn programme, the thing is I lost Ross because people saw his capability so he did break his contract in the end and I wasn't surprised, he was offered a job doing the Jaguar [World Sportscar] programme

Brawn-produced 1989 Arrows was let down by reliability

for Tom Walkinshaw. And I've often thought if he'd seen his contract out with Ohashi and the Porsche engine I think Ross would have turned that programme around. His skill at that level I think he would have brought Porsche to a modified engine. I don't know, but seeing him operate, Ross is one of the best managers of a design programme ever, he puts good people around him and he manages them very well because he's just got an inherent understanding, as Adrian Newey has, of what the car should be.

"John Barnard's another one. In fact I got John Barnard to come to Arrows when I was in a joint venture with Tom Walkinshaw and the only problem with that association, Tom was a very difficult person to work with because he was quite arrogant and I don't think arrogance is any good if you haven't got the right engine.

"We had a Yamaha engine and it was not very good and Tom took Yamaha to task, and that's very difficult to do with the Japanese. They're not an arrogant race themselves so when they're having to deal with someone that's very arrogant walls go up, and that relationship didn't develop in the way it should have done. But the engine wasn't good enough so John Barnard got caught in that triangle.

"And it's a shame actually because the relationship with Tom didn't last. Tom got himself into an awful lot of trouble with his Formula 1 team, but as Bernie said to me, I said, 'Bernie, you put us together, why do you think it didn't work?' He said 'good question Jackie, I don't know', because everything Tom did before had turned to gold, been very successful. But the Formula 1 enterprise with me was complete failure, I really still don't know to this day why.

"I know the boardroom was a pretty toxic place, in the end I had to step back. But I'm sorry for him, I think all that stress and everything else led to the cancer, so in the end he didn't make it either, neither did the team, which was a great shame. Partnerships in life are so important, they should all be harmonious and when they're not no-one wins."

Question: You have been a major player in the British Racing Drivers' Club. What advice would you give to up-and-coming drivers today?
Russell Scobbie
Via email

JO: "Ken Tyrrell, before he died – and there was a bit of an uproar with some problems with Tom Walkinshaw and the BRDC at one stage – said to me 'why don't you join the board at the BRDC?' I said 'you must be out of your mind', he said 'we'll go along and talk to them and see whether or not you want to do it'.

"I did enjoy it, in fact I do have three careers: I drove the cars, I made a team for someone else to drive them, and then I managed the stage on which they played on. As far as satisfaction in life they were three things but all done at different levels. Driving the car was right at the top, owning the team the most important person then was the designer, and running the stage management definitely was a much lower level. But I enjoyed the challenge, fell out with a lot of people while doing it.

"The second grand prix contract with the very expensive pits [at Silverstone] that Bernie wanted built is something that sort of hangs in the balance of whether that was the right thing to do or not; I don't know [whether it was right]. I'm glad that all the arguments about things I did when I was chairman for a short period of time but director for nine years, I still maintain that the BRDC at Silverstone without a grand prix would have been a loss, and I'm glad that all the complaints about building the new pits and all that is now bearing fruit because the British Grand Prix under Stuart Pringle, he was BRDC membership committee and now CEO of Silverstone Circuits, is proving it right that it is very important Silverstone retained the British Grand Prix, it is the only circuit that could do it. So I have some satisfaction although some of the corners got knocked off in the process."

MN: Did you have much contact with up-and-coming drivers in your BRDC role?

JO: "Derek Warwick and Damon Hill, don't forget Damon Hill was president of the BRDC, I'm not sure he was comfortable doing it but in doing so opened up a pathway to him to being quite successful in his current position in Formula 1 with Sky. He left and I persuaded Derek to do it and every time I see Derek he says 'you conned me, you said it was only one day a week, and it ended up being a lifetime involvement'. And I said 'yeah but look at work you've done with the young driver programme at Silverstone, you should have much satisfaction there'.

"And I still see him, he came to my 80th birthday last year, I hadn't seen him for a while, and the first thing he said was, again, 'you conned me'! But look at what you've done for the young drivers' programme at the BRDC. It's not the only reason why we have quite a lot of British drivers in international motorsport and particularly in F1 but it is a contributing factor Derek and that's down to the work that you put in. So the satisfaction came in a different way." ■

30/31 JULY 2016

Oliver ruffled feathers on Silverstone's behalf as BRDC director

In more recent times Oliver has been a frequent classic car racer

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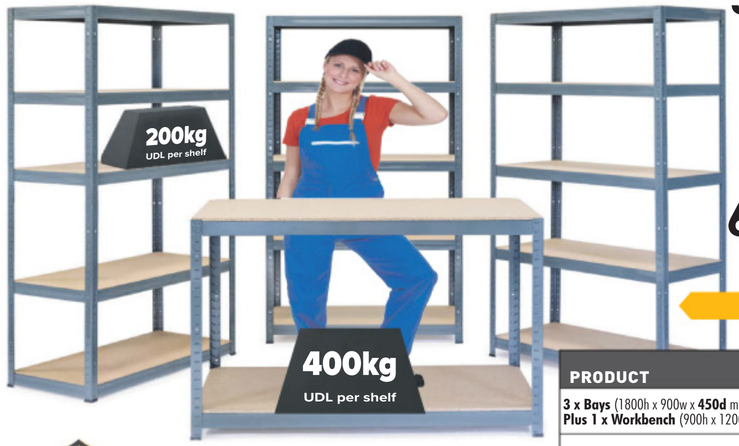

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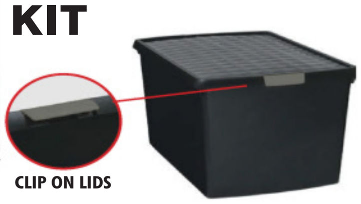

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NATIONAL HOT RODS: SKEGNESS RACEWAY BY GRAHAM BROWN

APRIL 7

FRENETIC FRIDAY CAN'T STOP WALLER-BARRETT

Carl Waller-Barrett seemingly can't stop winning finals at Skegness, the Suffolk-based racer banging in his third in a row at the east-coast venue with victory over Billy Wood and Rob McDonald.

Completing the deja vu effect Barry Limer won a heat, just as he did at the Easter Skegness meeting a year ago, while Nationals stalwart Dick Hillard took a welcome, if nowadays rare, win from the other heat race.

The opening heat kicked off with Peter Elliott leading but it wasn't long before the chasing pack was on his tail, headed up by Hillard and Kym Weaver. Elliott was soon forced backwards as the rest hustled through, Hillard and Weaver being joined by Nick Roots, Mark Shelper, Hayden Ballard and Joey Palmer in the lead scrap.

Weaver went spinning out of the lead battle at Turn 4, though Hillard still had to fend off Roots over the last couple of laps. Hillard's experience made sure he stayed in front.

A coming together early in heat two between Ballard and Palmer brought on an early yellow flag. When the racing resumed Elliott had another go at leading before Limer took over going into Turn 3. Shelper, who was having a good day at the office, swiftly appeared in second with Roots third, though once Roots lost his grip on the inside berth he lost places hand over fist as Weaver moved up to press Shelper.

But those who've been following the Nationals recently might well have been pencilling in Waller-Barrett for another last-gasp second heat win as he took to the outside line and got on one of his characteristic charges. He was through to second and chasing hard after leader Limer with six laps to run and backmarkers were threatening to delay Limer. There was to be no last-lap heroics from CW-B this time though as Limer was still safely clear at flag fall.

The final turned into something of a scrappy affair decided largely by two incidents. The first was a three-wide clash into Turn 1 that helped Billy Wood through to second place (but also initially meant he was black crossed) behind polesitter Waller-Barrett. The second was a multi-car smash on Turns 3-4, which eliminated more than a third of the field either through damage or disqualification.

The rest of the race was all about a CW-B versus Wood lead dice which could have gone either way, especially when Wood outfumbled Waller-Barrett in traffic to go ahead briefly before CW-B boxed him in behind another lapped car to restore his lead.

The pair avoided all sorts of other mayhem going on and as the lap boards came out the leader finally asserted his authority, Waller-Barrett making it a three-peat of Skeggy victories ahead of the (initially penalised by later rescinded) Wood, the pair having left third man McDonald over half a lap behind.

Results

Organiser: Skegness Raceway **When:** April 7 **Where:** Skegness Raceway **Starters:** 23 **Heat one:** 1 Dick Hillard (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Nick Roots (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Mark Shelper (Peugeot 206cc); 4 Hayden Ballard (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Joey Palmer (Ford Fiesta); 6 Carl Waller-Barrett (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 Karl Baker (Ginetta G40R); 8 Paul Wright (Vauxhall Tigra). **Heat two:** 1 Barry Limer (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Waller-Barrett; 3 Kym Weaver (Vauxhall Tigra); 4 Billy Wood (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Shelper; 6 George Turiccki (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 Baker; 8 Hillard. **Final:** 1 Waller-Barrett; 2 Wood; 3 Rob McDonald (Vauxhall Tigra); 4 Baker; 5 Shelper; 6 Chris Haird (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 Perry Cooke (Vauxhall Tigra); 8 Ballard; 9 Roots; 10 Chris Aldridge (Vauxhall Tigra). **Points:** Wood 407; Cooke 345; Haird 343; Aaron Dew 329; Aldridge 294; Jason Kew 294.

Photos: mkpics.net

Carl Waller-Barrett leads Billy Wood in the final

Joey Palmer and Paul Wright get together in the final

5 NATIONS RALLYCROSS: LYDDEN HILL BY HAL RIDGE

APRIL 8

EVEN A DODGY GEARBOX CAN'T DERAIL CHAMP O'DONOVAN AS HE STARTS WITH A VICTORY

Reigning British Rallycross champion Patrick O'Donovan overcame semi-final gearbox dramas to win the opening round of the 2023 series at Lydden Hill on Easter Saturday.

Racing the Hansen Motorsport Peugeot 208 WRX that he will campaign this year in the British and European series, O'Donovan was fastest in free practice, qualifying one and qualifying two on his debut in the former World RX machine, then led the first semi-final from the front of the order. However, gearbox problems on the third lap forced the 19-year-old out of the race, handing the advantage to his father, Ollie O'Donovan, who took the semi win.

While returnee driver Jack Thorne won the second semi-final and, by virtue of his Intermediate Classification ranking behind top qualifier Patrick O'Donovan, took pole position, Patrick O'Donovan was handed a lifeline by being the fourth classified finisher in the first semi. That was because Michael Boak had failed to leave the startline on his British RX Supercar debut due to clutch problems with his Skoda Fabia and Michael Sellar spun off on the opening lap in his Citroen DS3.

Patrick O'Donovan's Team RX Racing squad got the gearbox changed in time to make the final, where he lined up on the back row of the grid in seventh.

Away from the start Thorne made the best launch, ahead of Ollie O'Donovan and electric racer Viktor Vranckx, the Belgian 17-year-old making his 5 Nations BRX debut in the RX2e machine he raced in the World RX support category last year.

Behind, Patrick O'Donovan had climbed to fourth by the exit of Turn 1 and then overtook his 2022 RX2e rival Vranckx up the hill on the opening tour. He was soon onto the rear of his father's Proton Iriz.

Up front, Thorne began to pull an advantage, but O'Donovan Jr passed Sr on the inside into the hairpin on lap two and began his pursuit of leader Thorne.

Having closed on the rear of the similar Peugeot 208, O'Donovan twice made a move to overtake Thorne at the hairpin but waited to take his final-corner joker on the fourth tour, maintaining his track position. Thorne pushed hard and responded on the next lap, but it wasn't enough to stop O'Donovan moving into the lead en route to his eighth career win.

Behind, Ollie O'Donovan also jokered on the fourth lap behind his son and returned to the main circuit side-by-side with Vranckx, O'Donovan's Iriz RX getting forced wide on the loose-surface Turn 1, losing time. Vranckx would ultimately finish an impressive third, while the returning Roberts Vitols finished fourth in Team Duo's Citroen C4.

Ollie O'Donovan finished fifth, with Tristan Ovenden in sixth.

Slawomir Woloch won the Supernational class final, while Tyler Mcalpin dominated the Junior final and World RX star Klara Andersson claimed victory in the RX150 class.

Photo: Tom Banks Photography

O'Donovan charged from the back to win

Results

Organiser: LHMC **When:** April 8 **Where:** Lydden Hill **Starters:** 75 **Round 1:** 5 Nations BRX: 1 Patrick O'Donovan (Peugeot 208) 4m34.210s; 2 Jack Thorne (Peugeot 208) +1.198s; 3 Viktor Vranckx (RX2e); 4 Roberts Vitols (Citroen C4); 5 Ollie O'Donovan (Proton Iriz); 6 Tristan Ovenden (Citroen DS3). **Supernational:** Slawomir Woloch (BMW M3). **Junior:** Tyler Mcalpin (Suzuki Swift). **Swift Sport:** Max Weatherly (Suzuki Swift). **BMW Mini:** Dave Bellerby (BMW Mini). **ALL4 Mini:** Edward Stallard (BMW Mini). **Super Retro:** Lee Wood (Ford Escort). **Retro Rallycross:** Terry Moore (Austin Mini). **RX150:** Klara Andersson (RX150).

Photos: Steve Jones

DONINGTON PARK: MASTERS HISTORIC FESTIVAL BY PAUL LAWRENCE APRIL 7-8

Greensall celebrates a fine victory for the TVR

Gary Pearson and Alex Brundle led but lost Masters Sports Car Legends race

GREENSALL AND SPIERS TOP A THRILLING GENTLEMEN DRIVERS

After 90 minutes of flat-out racing, less than two seconds settled the Gentlemen Drivers race in favour of the TVR Griffith of Nigel Greensall and John Spiers. In an enthralling contest, where TVRs made all the running, the matter came down to the last two laps as Greensall battled ahead of John Davison and then fended off his rival to the flag.

John and Gary Pearson took the battle to the TVRs in their Jaguar E-type, but eventually had to settle for third with the inclusion of a 10-second pitstop penalty.

With his TVR significantly rebuilt over the winter, Spiers set a mighty pace as he led the first half of the race despite ferocious challenges from the TVRs of Davison, Oli Reuben and Mike Whitaker and the Pearson E-type, while Robin Ward was in giant-killing mode as he forged Ron Maydon's Ginetta G4 right up into contention as well.

Despite the challenges, Spiers drove superbly to bring the TVR into the pits in the lead. But a 30s longer stop due to the over four-litre engine and Greensall's Elite Driver status gave the car a big deficit for the second half of the race.

Initially, the Pearsons took the advantage as Ward and Maydon chased but then Davison pushed his TVR back into contention, as Greensall hunted them all down. Fresh from racing all over the world in recent weeks, Greensall was in typically combative form and was able to slash the advantage to the cars ahead even though an oily circuit, notably at Redgate, added an extra challenge.

With 15 minutes to go Greensall jumped the E-type and then set about Davison and with four laps to go, he stole ahead. To his great credit, Davison never gave up the chase and was close enough to attack with a lap to go.

"The opening stint was way beyond my expectations," Spiers said after one of the drives of the race.

The Pearsons netted third as the little Ginetta ran out of fuel with 10 minutes to go. Instead, best of the smaller-engine cars was Giles Dawson, who drove a stormer in his Lotus Elan and came close to edging the Pearsons for third once their pitstop penalty was applied.

Gary Pearson and Alex Brundle led the Masters Sports Car Legends in Pearson's Lola T70 Mk3B, but stopped late on with gearbox issues. Chris Beighton, who kept the leaders honest running solo in his similar car, inherited victory.

On his graduation to the top division, Stuart Wiltshire was always in control of the opening Masters Endurance Legends races in his sensational Peugeot 90X. A rather depleted seven-car field lined up for the second race and Wiltshire won again by a clear lap.

Craig Wilkins (Lamborghini Huracan) was dominant in the Masters GT Trophy and won the first race by more than a lap from the Porsche 911GT3 Cup of Sam Tordoff. Wilkins was on target to repeat his win in the second race when an engine issue forced him into the pits and so Tordoff took over for victory.

RACE WINNERS

HGPCA Front-engined
Races 1 & 2: Mark Shaw (Scarab Offenhauser)

HGPCA Rear-engined
Races 1 & 2: Justin Maeers (Brabham BT11A)

Masters Gentlemen Drivers
John Spiers/Nigel Greensall (TVR Griffith)

Masters Endurance Legends
Races 1 & 2: Stuart Wiltshire (Peugeot 90X)

Masters GT Trophy
Race 1: Craig Wilkins (Lamborghini Huracan); **Race 2:** Sam Tordoff (Porsche 911 GT3 Cup)

Masters Sports Car Legends
Chris Beighton (Lola T70 Mk3B)

Masters Pre '66 Touring Cars
Sam Tordoff (Ford Falcon)

PRE '66 TOURING CARS

Tordoff used fresh tyres to power Falcon to race victory

TORDOFF TOPS A CLASSY FIELD IN TOURING CARS

The hour-long Pre '66 Touring Car thrash, which brought the curtain down on the weekend, might have been a race of attrition but there was never much doubt about the outcome as Sam Tordoff and his Ford Falcon proved more than a match for a squadron of Ford Mustangs.

Knowing that he had a 30-second extra pitstop penalty due to his driver status, Tordoff had to attack for every one of the 43 laps. However, the longer pitstop allowed the Jordan team to change both rear tyres on the Falcon so that when Tordoff resumed he could maintain a ferocious pace.

Tordoff said: "We knew there was time to change tyres, and then I could attack again." His successful race strategy left him nearly half minute clear at the flag.

Early on, Nigel Greensall took the battle to the Falcon with the Mustang he shared with John Spiers, but soon after the stops Spiers was out after being assaulted by a Lotus Cortina. Instead, it was the relatively inexperienced Mike Whitaker Jr who took up the chase of Tordoff and drove a fine race in some serious company to finish an impressive runner-up. "I'm still getting back into it," said Whitaker Jr. "But I had a lot of fun out there."

Craig Davies just fended off the Henry Mann/Steve Soper Mustang for third, while up to fifth, with two attacking drives, came the fresh Ford Mustang of Alex Brundle and Abbie Eaton.

Further back, Marcus Jewell and Ben Clucas were the best of the Ford Lotus Cortina squadron.

HGPCA

Just making the start was touch-and-go for Mark Shaw

SHAW THING IN THE SCARAB FROM BACK TO FRONT

Mark Shaw charged from dead last in the pitlane to win the opening HGPCA front-engined race, first time out in the ex-Julian Bronson Scarab. On Saturday, he did the same again to complete a perfect weekend in the American Grand Prix project.

In Friday's opening race, Shaw was in trouble in the moments before the start when the Scarab refused to fire. "I didn't think it was going to start," said Shaw who just managed to get the car running and down to the end of the pitlane as the race started.

Meanwhile Miles Griffiths, in the Lotus 16 of Max Smith-Hilliard, romped away from the start but surrendered a big lead by retiring to the pits with a loss of rear brakes. Instead, Shaw was able to cut through the field and take the lead from the Maserati 250F of John Spiers, which had a sticking throttle.

Shaw won again in the second race but it was Griffiths who briefly starred. From the back of the grid, he was second into McLeans and took the lead just before front brake problems struck on the second lap.

In the rear-engined pack, Justin Maeers was the man to beat in his Brabham BT11A but on Friday had to deal with a race-long challenge from the BT3/4 of Tim Child. Charlie Martin shone in forging Paul Waine's Cooper T53 up to third from the back before pulling off at Redgate when the oil pressure dropped. On Saturday, Maeers won at a canter as Child chased from a distance.

Photos: Richard Styles

SNETTERTON: BRSCC BY MARK PAULSON

APRIL 8-9

Harding claimed the second Civic Cup spoils

Lewis Brown was a maiden winner in the massed ranks of the TCR UK pack

HARDING PERFORMS HIS CIVIC DUTIES

After two action-packed races, Jack Harding emerged as a first-time winner at the Civic Cup's Snetterton season-opener.

Harding could have broken his victory duck in Saturday's first race but the distraction of race-leader Morgan Bailey pulling up combined with a long brake pedal sent him off at Wilson. That relieved the pressure on Dan Thackeray who converted pole into victory ahead of Will Redford and former Mini Challenge Trophy racer Louie Capozzoli, with Harding fourth.

A rumbustious first lap in the reversed-grid race left Max Edmundson in front, and his defence from Redford allowed Harding to snatch second. Harding then bided his time before diving inside the leader at Nelson on the final lap. Edmundson ran wide and cut across the grass to stay in front and take the chequered flag but was demoted to second – still a maiden podium – for gaining an unfair advantage.

TCR UK also got under way with a strong field, boosted by an influx of new cars, drivers and teams. But while TCR star Josh Files (Hyundai Elantra N) was the pacesetter and one-time Ginetta GT5 champion Lewis Brown (Cupra Leon Competicion) claimed a debut win, third-year driver Bruce Winfield (Hyundai i30 N) came away happiest. Polesitter Files' sluggish getaway let Winfield lead the opener and, once back into second, Files did not challenge his Area Motorsport team-mate.

Following the frantic early exchanges of the reversed-grid race, Files emerged in front, shadowed by Brown. But the Elantra's engine would not survive so Brown won from Alex Ley (i30) and Winfield. Defending champion Chris Smiley took his new Honda Civic Type R FL5 to a race-one podium before crashing out in the opening skirmishes of the sequel.

Zac Lucas kept Simon Horrobin at bay to win the opening Fiesta ST240 thrash, and doubled up in race two as Alastair Kellett recovered from a lowly qualifying to snatch second from Horrobin. A blistering start from row three set Kellett on his way to victory in the finale as he overhauled John Cooper and avoided the mayhem behind. Ethan Rogers took a pair of ST150 wins, Matthew Pimlott the other.

In Modified Fords, Steve Scott-Dunwoodie's newly upgraded RS500 was set for a brace until his engine blew in the closing stages of race two, handing the honours to Dave Matthias. Josh Payton's glorious Cortina Mk2 twice took podiums.

Former GB3 frontrunner Bart Horsten anchored Keir McConomy's BMW 1 Series to Supersport Endurance Cup honours, but only after Julian McBride (BMW M3) was hit with a pitstop infringement penalty in the two-hour race.

Luke Hilton survived a track-limits penalty to win the Fiesta Junior opener but early contact removed him from contention in the sequel won by debutant Ryan Micallef.

RACE WINNERS

Civic Cup
Race 1: Dan Thackeray (EP3); **Race 2:** Jack Harding (EP3)

TCR UK
Race 1: Bruce Winfield (Hyundai i30 N TCR); **Race 2:** Lewis Brown (Cupra Leon Competicion TCR)

Fiesta ST240 & ST150
Races 1 & 2: Zachary Lucas (ST240); **Race 3:** Alastair Kellett (ST240)

Modified Fords
Race 1: Stephen Scott-Dunwoodie (Sierra RS500); **Race 2:** Dave Matthias (Sierra Sapphire Cosworth)

Supersport Endurance Cup
Keir McConomy/Bart Horsten (BMW 1 Series)

Fiesta Junior
Race 1: Luke Hilton (ST); **Race 2:** Ryan Micallef (ST)

CityCar Cup
Races 1 & 2: Elliot Lettis (Peugeot 107); **Race 3:** Stuart Bliss (Toyota Aygo)

Photos: Gary Hawkins

BRANDS HATCH: BARC BY BRIAN PHILLIPS

APRIL 8-9

PICKUPS STEAL THE SHOW IN BRANDS ENCOUNTERS

A new-look Pickup Trucks championship was among the action highlights of a long and varied Easter programme at Brands Hatch. Promotion for this meeting focused on truck racing's national championship heavyweights, but their smaller cousins and the supporting Mini Challenge Trophy took much of the spotlight away from the big boys.

The Pickups now have two heats and a final at each event, and it was reigning champion Reece Jones who triumphed in Sunday's final after trading places with Matt Simpson and Dale Gent in all three outings. Simpson won the first heat and Gent the second.

Paul Tompkins was best of the rest and finished third in the final after Simpson spun while trying to wrest the lead from Jones. Michael Smith, championship newcomer Chris Brockhurst and Daniel Fisher filled out the top six.

Tom Ovenden returned to the 2023 Mini Challenge Trophy as a favourite for victory, and a win plus two further podiums strengthened his prospects for the year. He overcame a poor start to win race one ahead of Jack Byrne, recovered from a first-lap mistake to finish second at the next attempt behind Byrne, and followed Alex Solley to the flag in race three with Byrne right behind.

Junior Saloons graduate Maximus Hall was the leading rookie in his first Mini Challenge appearance, taking fifth overall, and former Clio racer James Black was top rookie in the other two races.

Reigning champion Reece Jones was the dominant factor in the Pickups final

Three wins for defending seven-times champion Ryan Smith made him the weekend's most successful driver in round one of the 2023 truck racing championship. The remaining two races both went to the other multiple champion on the entry list Stuart Oliver.

Fastest qualifier Smith and his new truck comfortably won Saturday's two races, outstripping David Jenkins and Oliver. The task was much harder for Smith on Sunday with reversed grids coming into play, a point illustrated by Smith's third and second places in the next two races which were both won by Oliver with Jenkins very much in the mix.

Race five was another Smith triumph, restarted after a big first-corner shunt which took out both front-row trucks. Adam Bint won Division 2 after a fraught contest among the slightly slower class. The stoppage was the fourth of the trucks' weekend exploits.

The rest of the programme featured four Caterham Graduates races and two each for Hyundai Coupes, MG Owners' Club contenders and Kumho BMWs.

RACE WINNERS

Truck Racing Championship
Races 1 & 2: Ryan Smith (Daimler Freightliner); **Race 3 & 4:** Stuart Oliver (Volvo VNL); **Race 5:** Ryan Smith

Pickup Trucks Championship
Heat 1: Matt Simpson; **Heat 2:** Dale Gent; **Final:** Reece Jones

Mini Challenge Trophy
Race 1: Tom Ovenden; **Race 2:** Jack Byrne; **Race 3:** Alex Solley

Coupe Cup
Races 1 & 2: Wayne Rockett

MGOC Championship
Races 1 & 2: Scott Bugner (ZR)

BMW Championship
Race 1: James Card (E46 M3);
Race 2: Jason West (E46 M3)

Caterham Graduates Sigma 135
Race 1: Richard Groom;
Race 2: Ben Wheatley

Caterham Graduates Signa 150/ Sigmax
Race 1: Harry Senior;
Race 2: Harry Cramer

Photos: Martin Walsh

CIRCUIT OF IRELAND RALLY: ULSTER AUTOMOBILE CLUB BY MARTIN WALSH APRIL 8

Devine opened his 2023 win account

Moffett pushed hard for second

DEVINE IS THIRD WINNER IN THREE ROUNDS ON CIRCUIT OF IRELAND

Callum Devine (VW Polo GTi R5) and his co-driver Noel O'Sullivan resurrected their Irish Tarmac Championship title bid with a timely victory on the Circuit of Ireland Rally.

They came out best on the Easter classic where they led from start to finish to take a 10-second victory over title rivals and current series leaders Josh Moffett (Hyundai i20 R5) and Andy Hayes. Welsh driver Meirion Evans and co-driver Jonathan Jackson (VW Polo GTi R5) continued their run of podium finishes – 37.1s further behind in third.

Devine blasted his way through the opening stage and led Moffett by 3.2s only for the latter to trim the margin to a mere 0.3s with a totally committed drive on SS2 where Devine was cautious due to the high number of compressions. Even by then, the duo was edging away from the rest, headed by the Citroen C3 Rally2 of Desi Henry, Evans and Sam Moffett (Hyundai i20 N Rally2). A broken front-left driveshaft on the first stage ruled Cathan McCourt (Citroen C3 Rally2) out of the equation as he dropped to 80th and eventually finished 14th, but not before a huge moment over a jump on SS4.

Such was the sheer intensity of the leading contest that Devine's fastest time on SS3 only allowed him to increase his lead to 0.8s. The longest stage of the event, SS4 Shanmaghry 1 proved to be a game changer. Moffett, running first of the road, arrived at the stage finish with a front-left puncture picked up during the final mile while the right-hand side of his Hyundai showed signs of strong contact with a bale. Meanwhile, Devine highlighted the fact that he had earmarked the stage for possible gains. He pushed hard and, allied to Moffett's troubles, his lead margin stretched to 14.1s at the halfway mark.

While Evans reckoned he wasn't brave enough on the opening pair of stages and struggled to find grip on the next pair where his Polo seemed giddy over the bumps, he slotted into third from the Citroen C3 of Jonny Greer, who made set-up changes and recovered from a big scare on SS1. Henry had issues with the pop-off valve on SS4 and slipped to fifth ahead of Sam Moffett, who had to implement a system reset after his car cut-out on SS4.

Elsewhere, Robert Barrable (Citroen C3 Rally2) struggled to find the pace he showed on the final day of the West Cork and a fuel sensor was detected as the source of his problems.

In near-perfect conditions, Moffett ripped through the Tyrone terrain on maximum attack. With a pair of fastest stage times (SS5 and SS6) he reduced Devine's lead to 9.7s. The charge was nothing more than what rally leader Devine expected and he remained calm, focused and content with his own pace.

Evans, 24.9s behind Moffett, reckoned his Polo felt much better following some suspension adjustments. An improving Greer, one place and 9.6s behind the Welshman, was pleased that all the changes made were going in the right direction.

On the penultimate test Moffett gained a fraction of second to leave him 9.4s behind Devine, who then went on to seal his first win of the Irish Tarmac Championship season with the best time on Shanmaghry 2.

Interestingly, it was the third time in as many rounds that the series provided a different winner. Devine said: "It was a tight battle, but we expected that. We really had to work hard, but then Josh will always make you do that."

Moffett admitted that his fourth stage trouble didn't help his plight, but he retains the lead of the series.

In the face of a strong late charge from Greer, Evans pushed harder than he anticipated on the final stage and had 2.8s in hand. Sam Moffett finished fifth from Barrable followed by Henry, who dropped time with a puncture on SS6. Throughout the event Tarmac champion Gareth MacHale (VW Polo GTi R5) was on a confidence-building exercise following his heavy crash on the previous round. He netted eighth ahead of Garry Jennings aboard his new right-hand drive Ford Fiesta Rally2. Jason Black (Toyota Starlet) completed the top 10.

Donegal's Declan Boyle, campaigning the VW Polo GTi R5 usually driven by his son Michael, was destined for a sixth-place finish only for the luckless Donegal driver to crash heavily just a few junctions from finish of the final stage. Neither Walsh nor co-driver Patrick Walsh were injured. William Creighton (Ford Fiesta Rally3) was untroubled en route to 13th.

RESULTS

Circuit of Ireland Rally 2023

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Callum Devine/Noel O'Sullivan	VW Polo GTi R5	58m53.4s
2	Josh Moffett/Andy Hayes	Hyundai i20 R5	+10.2s
3	Meirion Evans/Jonathan Jackson	VW Polo GTi R5	+47.3s
4	Jonathan Greer/Niall Burns	Citroen C3 Rally2	+50.1s
5	Sam Moffett/Keith Moriarty	Hyundai i20 Rally2	+1m14.2s
6	Robert Barrable/Gordon Noble	Citroen C3 Rally2	+1m59.4s
7	Desi Henry/Paddy Robinson	Citroen C3 Rally2	+2m01.2s
8	Gareth MacHale/Ger Conway	VW Polo GTi R5	+2m42.4s
9	Garry Jennings/Rory Kennedy	Ford Fiesta Rally2	+3m09.4s
10	Jason Black/Karl Egan	Toyota Starlet	+3m50.6s.

Class winners: Trevor Wilson/Paul Mulholland (Porsche 911); Kyle White/Sean Topping (Peugeot 208 Rally4); Ronan Greene/Gerard Greene (Vauxhall Nova); Enda McBride/Kyle McDaid (Honda Civic); Mickey Conlon/Domhnall Lennon (Ford Escort); Oliver Benton/Kyle Diffin (Ford Escort); Black/Egan; Tomas O'Rourke/Tomas Scallan (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); William Creighton/Liam Regan (Ford Fiesta Rally3); Greer/Burns; Martin Cairns/Peter Ward (Ford Fiesta Rally2).

Evans kept up his Tarmac title hopes with a podium

Jennings slid his way into the top 10 in his new Fiesta

NATIONAL AND HISTORIC ROUND-UP

Black fends off allcomers in the battle for the national category honours in his Starlet

Jason Black (Toyota Starlet) won the national category finishing 3.9 seconds ahead of the Toyota Corolla of Kevin Eves with English driver Oliver Benton (Ford Escort) over a minute behind in third.

Black led from the start and at the halfway mark was 11.4s ahead of Eves, who had competition-winning co-driver Owen Mallon on the pace notes. They survived a lurid spin at a crossroads on the third stage.

On SS5 and SS6 the flying Eves pared the deficit to 3.1s and while Black powered the 2.5-litre engined Toyota into a 3.9s lead on the penultimate stage, it transpired to be the final action as the last stage was curtailed due to the Declan Boyle crash. Black actually netted 10th overall in the main event.

Frank Kelly had a short-lived event when his Escort made a spectacular exit on the opening stage, flipping end over end. Luckily, he and his co-driving daughter Lauren were unscathed, unlike their car.

Meanwhile, in the Historic category, Trevor Wilson (Porsche 911) took the honours - 20.3s ahead of the Escort of Duncan Williams with Wayne Evans (Escort) 49.4s further adrift in third. Early leader Tommy O'Connell (Escort) retired with mechanical trouble on SS2.

COLUMNIST

JIMMY PISZCYK

The charismatic 16-year-old Australian is pursuing his single-seater dream in British F4

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Motorsport Images

Piszcyk turned down title to pursue F4 chance

Australian is adapting well

My preparations for this season are going pretty well, as I come to the UK from Australia to race in British Formula 4 with Hitech Grand Prix. We're doing lots of testing, lots of sim work and work in the gym and stuff like that, so I'm feeling pretty prepared ahead of the first round, which is next weekend, April 22-23, at Donington Park.

I wanted to race in this championship because so many different names have gone through British F4. For example you've got Formula 1 drivers such as Lando Norris, and Jack Doohan, a couple of Aussies have been through it, and it's a pretty good championship, it's very strong.

I was doing Formula Ford Australia last year and I was looking for my next step and what I was going to do for the year after. And I wanted to continue with open wheelers as F1's my goal. Then we got in contact with Hitech GP – the team that took Alex Dunne to last year's British F4 championship – and from then on it was all go: we came over here to the UK, did some testing in October and now we're racing in British F4.

If I had to put it in words what I'm looking to achieve this season, I'd be pretty satisfied with a top five. But moreover my aims are just going away from the championship knowing that I've given it my all, I progressed as a driver, learnt as much as I can about racing in Europe because that's bit different to Australia, and just taking it all in really.

Late last year I was leading the Formula Ford Australia championship heading into the season finale meeting. But we had come to the UK and had done some testing and I had to make the decision if I wanted to go back, finish my Formula Ford championship and possibly win that championship, or stay here in the UK and do more testing in the F4.

The decision I made was to stay here and leave that Formula Ford championship behind. It was a very hard decision, there was a lot of emotions in it. But I was looking into my future as the more tests in the F4 I do the better I'm going to be for this year.

Formula Ford and F4 are pretty different. It's a different driving style but I've adapted pretty well to the F4 car and it's going good so far.

Piszcyk grew up watching Supercars in Adelaide

Doing Formula Ford has also helped me develop, such as it's helped me a lot with car control because in the Formula Fords you're really on the edge and oversteery, you're really letting the rear kick out at you. And Formula Ford helped me a lot in the racecraft because you do get a bit of a slipstream and passing is very important. Now I can transition all those skills that I've learnt in that into the F4 and hopefully they can give me a bit of an edge on the other drivers.

I am from Adelaide and my dad watched every F1 race that was held there. He was a motorsport nut. He didn't do anything himself, there's no-one in our family or our bloodline that's done anything with motorsport that we know of, but he loved it so much and he's passed that down to me and got me into it and I'm pretty hooked on it.

I wasn't there for the grands prix in Adelaide, but I watched the Adelaide 500 Supercars events. I used to go to all of them all the time when I was younger and then I just picked it up, I did go karting and now it's all just taken off like a rocket ship basically: we're here in England now.

The actual story how I got into go karting was we had quad bikes around the house. And we used to go to a holiday place in Australia and drive the quads on the beach and things like that, and I loved it so much and I was asking and begging dad to go to a place to go on jumps and things. Then the guy at the place said "why don't you try out go karting?" I tried that out and loved that so much and then it all just kicked off. I started progressing and my dreams just grew every time I was in the car and now we're here.

"I went karting and loved it and now it's all taken off like a rocket ship"

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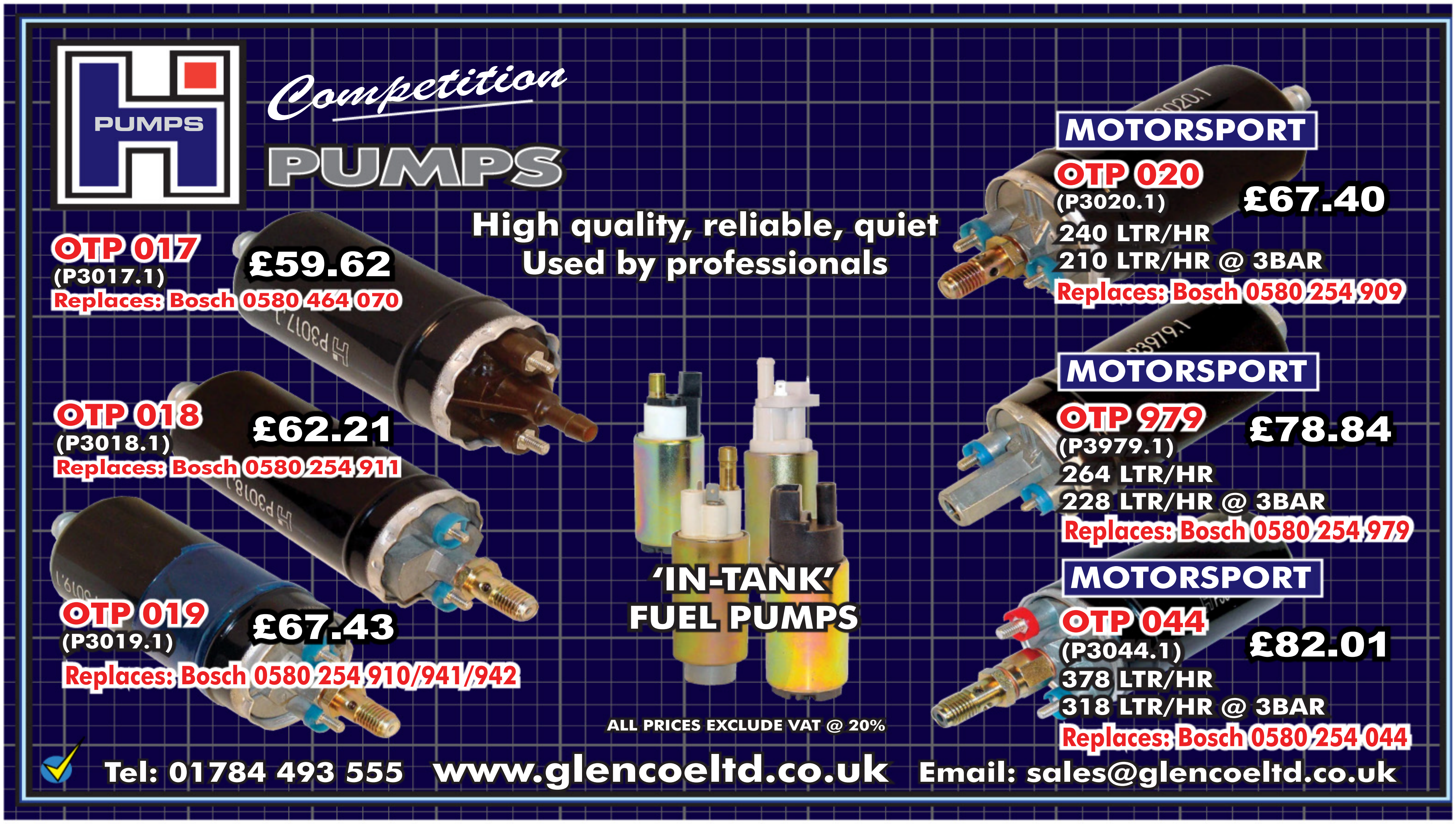

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WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE REVIEW

The late and legendary Dan Gurney was born on this day (Thursday) in 1931. A race-winner across Formula 1, Le Mans, IndyCar, NASCAR and elsewhere, a constructor, team owner, inventor of podium champagne spraying – and would-be presidential candidate. Gurney's CV indicates why he holds such high status within motorsport.

And reflecting this status, Goodwood at its Revival event in 2012 paid special tribute to Gurney. And it was indeed special. Lord March chauffeured Gurney in a Ford Mustang then delivered a fitting eulogy. The Royal Marines played the Star Spangled Banner, there was an aerial salute and tickertape flew.

It was all followed by a parade of various of Gurney's cars, in which the man himself got chauffeured by Tony Brooks in a 1959 Ferrari 250TR59. And of course there was a great reception from onlookers.

Gurney (r) remembered

And you can watch half an hour of it on Goodwood's YouTube channel, at: youtube.com/watch?v=rIL7XVpQI4g.

Graham Keilloh

TV GUIDE

Ahead of this weekend's IndyCar race at the famous Long Beach circuit, Sky Sports F1 tomorrow (Friday) lets us catch up with the season so far in full, by showing the preceding St Petersburg and Texas races in their entirety. The St Pete season opener starts at 1700hrs and that is followed immediately by the Texas round starting at 2025hrs. And St Petersburg's race is shown again on Saturday from 1315hrs.

Then on Monday the channel gives you a chance to watch the Long Beach race in full if you didn't catch it live. It's on at 1100hrs-1400hrs then again at 1700hrs-2000hrs.

IndyCar at Long Beach

Sky Sports F1 tomorrow also shows us the best of last weekend's star-studded British GT Oulton Park season opener, at 1200hrs-1300hrs and at 1600hrs-1700hrs. It's shown again a couple of times on Tuesday evening/Wednesday morning too.

And immediately before that first British GT showing tomorrow Sky Sports F1 shows the best of Oulton's GB3 action at 1100hrs-1200hrs.

LIVE TV

FIA World Endurance Championship Portimao
Race: Sunday, 1130hrs-1300hrs and 1430hrs-1830hrs, Eurosport 2

IndyCar Long Beach
Practice 1: Friday, 2300hrs-0015hrs, Sky Sports F1
Practice 2: Saturday, 1645hrs-1745hrs, Sky Sports F1
Qualifying: Sunday, 2005hrs-2120hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race: Sunday, 2000hrs-2300hrs, Sky Sports F1

NASCAR Martinsville
Race: Sunday, 1930hrs-2330hrs, Viaplay Sports 2

LISTINGS

RACING SATURDAY-SUNDAY

■ **Goodwood, Sussex**
80th Members Meeting: Classic and historic races **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1420hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) Sunday, racing from 1015hrs (qualifying from 0920hrs) **Admission** from £96 Web Goodwood.co.uk Contact 01243 755055

■ **Donington Park Nat, Leics**
MSVR meeting: 7 Race Series, Allcomers, Snetterton Saloons, Northern Sports/Saloons, Mini Miglia, Mini Se7en, Bentley Challenge **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1315hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1035hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** adult £15, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0344 225 4422

■ **Croft, N Yorks**
750MC meeting: Club Enduro, Ma7da, 5Club MX-5, Type R Trophy, Sports 1000, Roadsports, Historic 750 Formula, Sports Specials, MK Cup 200 **Starts** Saturday, racing from tba (qualifying from 0930hrs) Sunday, racing from 1200hrs **Admission** adult £16, under 15 free **Web** croftcircuit.co.uk **Contact** 01325 721815

■ **Silverstone National, Northants**
MSVR meeting: FF1600, EnduroKa, Bernie's V8s, Sports 2000 Duratec, Sports 2000 Historic, Clubmans, Track Day Championship, Track Day Trophy **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1310hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1010hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** £17 **Web** silverstone.co.uk Tickets online only

■ **Brands Hatch Indy, Kent**
BRSCC meeting: Mazda MX-5, Audi TT, BMW Compact Cup, BMW 1 Series, Renault Cup, Evolution Trophy, Classic VW, MG Metro, Fun Cup **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1125hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1140hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) **Admission** adult £17, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0344 225 4422

■ **Cadwell Park, Lincs**
BARC meeting: Legends, Caterham Academy, 2CV, MINI, Track Attack, NW Sports/Saloons, Junior Saloons, Karts **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1220hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0900hrs **Admission** adult £15, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0344 225 4422

■ **Knockhill Clockwise, Fife**
KMSC meeting: Legends, C1 Cup, Fiesta ST, Mini Cooper, Classic Sports and Saloons, Modsports **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1330hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1000hrs (qualifying from 0835hrs) **Admission** adult £16, **Web** knockhill.com

■ **Mondello Park, Ireland**
MPSC meeting: BOSS Ireland, Formula Vee, Formula Sheane, Fiesta ST, Fiesta Zetec, Seat Supercup, Irish Touring Cars, Irish Supercars, Stryker Sportscars, Future Classics, HRCA Historics, Junior Mini, Legends **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1100hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1100hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** adult E17.50, **Web** mondellopark.ie

RALLYING SATURDAY

■ **Rallynuts Stages Rally**
Midland Manor Motor Club (spectators admitted) **Web** rallynutsrally.co.uk

■ **Moonraker Forest Rally, Ireland**
Munster Car Club (spectators admitted) **Web** munstercarclub.com

SUNDAY

■ **SMC Stages Anglesey**
Stockport Motor Club (spectators admitted) **Web** stockport061.co.uk

Details correct at time of going to press, please check with organisers

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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!

Chris Collier's shot from the TCR UK media day at a soggy Donington Park recently

Dan Lowson went to the Britcar opener

GTs in the mist, from Rich Cranston

Callum Newsham's prep, by Dean Chilvers

Flying Merc in GT Cup action, by David Harbey

NEXT EDITION OUT THURSDAY, APRIL 20

READERS' Q&A: JAMES ROSSITER

Racer-turned-Formula E team boss tackles the readers' questions

THE TIN-TOP TERRORS ARE READY TO RESUME

We look ahead to the British Touring Car Championship green light

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